FIVE SERMONS PREACHED upon ſeverall Occaſions.

(The Texts whereof are ſet downe in the next Page.)

By IOHN SELLER.

Aug. de Doct. Chriſt. lib. 1. cap. 1.

Omnis res quæ dando non deficit, dum habetur, & non datur, non dum habetur.

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The Texts of the ſeverall Sermons.

Serm. I.

PSAL. 116. 16. *O Lord truly I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant.* Preached before the King at *Bagſhow*, upon Tueſday, *Septemb.* [illegible] 1635.

Serm. II.

IOHN, 21. 22. *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou mee.* Before the King at *Hampton* Court, upon Sunday, *Septemb.* 27. 1635.

Serm. III.

IOHN, 1. 16. *And Grace for grace.* To the Houſhold at *White-Hall*, Novemb. 29. 1629.

IV.

ECCLES. 12. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth.*

IOHN, 20. 17. *Touch me not, for I am not yet aſcended to my Father.*

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QVinque has Conciones à Domino **Iohanni Sellero** *habitas, perlegi, nec in iis quicquam reperio quò minùs Cum utilitate publicâ imprimantur.*

Sa: Baker.

Ex ædibus Londin:
Martii die ultimo
1636.

Seſſi. 1.

THE FIRST SERMON

PSALME 116. 16.

O Lord truely I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant.

THe Feare of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdome, and *the end of all things is this, Feare GOD and keepe his Commandements.* Nay, the meanes which happily joyneth together this beginning and this end, is ſtill the ſame; *Bleſſedneſs* [illegible] [illegible]. This is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the entrance, the progreſſe, the cloſe of all true practicall Religion; and this happy beginning, and this happy end is the ſubject which I ſhall nowe commend unto you from the example of the Prophet in my text, *O Lord, truly I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant.* In the handling of which words, three pious obſervations there are which I ſhall now preſent unto you. The firſt is this.

God is our Lord and Maſter, and we muſt doe him ſervice; *O Lord I am thy ſervant*: an argument where-wherin I ſhall not ſo much need proofes as perſwaſions. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee ? and whom on earth in compariſon of thee ?* He that knoweth there is a God, cannot but acknowledge, the onely difficultie is to winne our hearts to proportion our ſervice to his love. *Thou art my God and I will thanke thee, thou art my God and I will praiſe thee.* We all know there was a time, if I may ſo ſpeake, before all time, a time of Eternitie before all time of ſucceſſion, when God by himſelfe injoyed all fulneſſe of complacencie in himſelfe. For as the Sunne in the Heavens ſhineth in its full brightneſſe, though there were no earth to ſhine upon ; ſo the brightneſſe of Gods glory was then it its full luſtre, when Trinity in Vnitie, and Vnitie in Trinity, as it is now all things to all, was then all things to it ſelfe: Angels and men, and for their ſakes Heaven and earth, when in the powerfull and gracious counſell of his will with a word ſpeaking onely, he created: all this was done, not that thereby he might augment his glory, but communicate it. For, *can* Iob.22. *a man be profitable unto God*; and yet who is there to whom God hath not beene profitable? He ſtands not in need of our ſervice, but we cannot live without his command. When one man waites upon another, there is for the most part a mutuall dependance on each other: the ſervant cannot live without his Maſter, the Maſter knowes not how to want his ſervant. The glory of a King is upheld by the multitude of his people; for let Subjects withdraw their alleagiance, and we ſee Princes themſelves are but private men, and therefore we reade in the ſtate of *Rome*, that when the commons, upon termes of diſcontent, withdrew themſelves from the Nobles, the Nobles were forc't to become petitioners unto the commons, and to retaine ſomewhat of the rigour of their command upon them, that they might hold them afterward more conſtant in their ſervice. But looke upon our great Maſter, the King of Kings, and wee ſhall finde no ſuch depending references: doe all the world withdraw themſelves from him, yet ſtill [*Deus ſibi eſt Deus ſufficiens*] God alone by himſelfe is all ſufficient to himſelfe; ſo that the leſſe neceſſary our ſervice is, the more neceſſary is it wee ſhould ſerve, if not for Gods ſake, yet for our owne: hee can looſe nothing by us, but wee looſe all things in the loſſe of him.

And yet ſtrange it is, and wonderfull to conſider, thereby with all cheerfulneſſe to draw us to his ſervice, how carefull he hath been of us, who are yet ſo little uſefull unto him. Looke upon our Creation, when wee firſt came into the world, and you ſhall ſee, that as God made all other creatures for men, ſo man, becauſe for himſelfe, he would make like himſelfe; that as often as wee view our owne ſoules, and ſee whoſe image and ſuperſcription they have, this might perſwade us to give them up unto God, from whom, and for whoſe ſervice they were firſt receiv'd. Looke upon our preſervation, ſince wee came into the world; and but that, *Quod omni anno fit, aſſiduitate amittit admirationem*, as St. *Auguſtine* complaineth, the continuall injoying of theſe great bleſſings leſſens our admiration; with what joy might wee behold the Heavens ſpread over us like a curtaine, the Sun, the Moone, like two unwearied Gyants, alwayes for our ſakes rejoycing to runne theyr courſe, by vertue of whoſe ſeverall motions and influences, while the earth remaines, Seed-time and harveſt, Summer and Winter, night and day ſhall not ceaſe, that ſo the neceſſitude of the different ſeaſons

In Iohan. Tract. 8.

of the yeare may give us contentment in them all. And if all this be yet too little, looke upon his preparation for our ſafe conduct to another world, and there behold the word of Life. *The ſincere milke of the Word* for children, *ſtrong meate* for men, food cōvenient for us all, behold the Sacraments of life, the ſignes, the ſeales, the pledges of the Love of God, behold the Spirit of life, the power of the Holy Ghoſt overſhadowing our ſoules, and by an immortall ſeed begetting us again unto a lively hope of immortality: ſurely then well may the eyes of all men waite upon him, whoſe *eyes runne through the whole earth*, nay through the whole heaven too, to ſhew themſelves powerfull and gracious unto them that ſerve him.

And indeed, if we ſhall conſider the ſeverall attributes of God how they are fitted to the ſeverall neceſſities of men, this might be a ſtrong perſwaſion alſo to draw us to his ſervice. For God is a powerfull God and what more fitting for our weakneſſe; when the Prince of this world, like the ſtrong man, hath by his ſubtle temptations got footing in our ſoules, unleſſe God, as Iſaye, the Prince of Princes, and Captaine of our

Salvation, ſhall make re-entry, and caſt him out againe; weake and wretched men that we are, who were able to deliver us? God is a wiſe God, and what more fitting for our folly? for [*Melius ſtulti* [illegible] *viverent, ſi regi* [illegible] *ſapientum.*] Happie were it for all fooles, had they but wiſe Maſters. And when we ſee ſo fooliſh oft-times, we are we ſo ignorant to preferre the Tree of Knowledge before the Tree of Life; how neceſſary is it, that wee ſhould goe unto Gods Schoole, and there learne, that *this is life eternall*, the perfection of all knowledge, *to know him to be the onely true God*, and

August. de Util. Credendi.

Iesus

IESVS CHRIST, *whom hee hath ſent.* Laſtly, God is a mercifull God, and what more fitting for our ſinne? for every man we know to be a ſinner, every ſinne a tranſgreſſion of the Law, every tranſgreſſion liable unto a curſe, and this curſe no leſſe then eternall death: how neceſſary is it then that we ſhould ſeeke for a powerfull protection in the ſervice of this Mercifull God, that by his aſſiſtance we may be able to conteſt, not onely with fleſh and blood, but even with Principalities and powers, and ſay with Saint *Paul, Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect,* his elect and faithfull ſervants?

vants? *It is God that juſtifies, who is able to condemne us?* Seeing then we are all weake and helpleſſe, and want God as a powerfull protector; we are ignorant and fooliſh, and want him as a wiſe inſtructer; we are wretched and ſinfull, and want him as a mercifull Saviour; if our duties can not prevaile, may even our neceſſities enforce us, and let every man ſay, and ſay from his heart, *O Lord truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant.* And thus much for my firſt obſervation, I come now unto a ſecond.

2. As God is our Lord and Maſter, and wee muſt doe him ſervice, ſo this

ſervice muſt be hearty and ſincere: and therefore wee ſee here, to prevent all ſuſpicion of Hypocriſie, the Pſalmiſt bindeth himſelfe with a threefold cord. Firſt we have a profeſſion of his ſervice, *O Lord I am thy Servant*; ſecondly, we have a repetition of this profeſſion, *I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant*; laſtly, we have an aſſeveration affixt unto this repetition, *O Lord truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant*; and juſtly may we be true and ſincere in our ſervice unto him, who in all his promiſes is ſo ſincere and faithfull unto us; nay therefore, onely requires ſincerity in our ſervice, that hee may more faithfully reward us. When one man waites upon another, that which breeds indignation and reluctancie, the wages oftentimes are proportioned, not according to the worth of the Servant, but the fancie of the Maſter: and ſo we read of Levvis the eleventh of *France*, who neglecting men of better abilities, made his Taylor his Herald, his Chyrurgion his Chancellor, his Barber his Ambaſſadour, and of Pope *Paul* the fift, that he would make no learned Cardinals, leaſt by them his owne ignorance might be upbraided, his Auditer, his Treaſurer, the Clarke of the Chamber, theſe are the unworthy

View of *France*. page 61.

The *New-Man*, pag. 48.

worthy Worthies he made choiſe of to fill up his cõſiſtorie. But when man waits upon God, ſo diligent is he in rewarding thoſe who diligently ſeek him, that as in his Book all our members, ſo all the ſervice of our mēbers are recorded; every humble ſigh and groane of the heart, every good word of the mouth, every penitent teare of the eye, every charitable act of the hand ſhall be remembred. *He is* not like moſt Maſters, who lay the chiefe burden of the worke upon the Servants ſhoulders, & reape the main benefit thēſelves; but where hee gives us Talents to labour & increaſe withall, he requires againe nor Talents nor increaſe; nay, *Quando munera numerantur*, according to the proportion of the increaſe, ſtill hee increaſeth his rewards. For ſo we reade, that when hee who had received five Talents, had gained five more, his Lord requires againe (not principall nor uſe) but to him that hath ſtill ſhall be more given, even uſe upon uſe. *Thou haſt beene faithfull over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many: enter into thy Maſters joy.* Now who would not gladly with all ſincerity ſerve ſuch a Maſter, from whom he may aſſuredly expect the whole benefit, yea a thouſand times more then the whole Benefit of his own ſervice? Eſpecially, when

Salvian. de Gubernat. Dei. lib. 7.

when as wee know that God hath his different servants, some for formall, some for reall; so hee hath different rewards too; for formals he hath his formalities, his realities for reals. *Seest thou how Ahab* (sayth God) *humbleth himselfe?* humbleth himselfe with a temporarie sorrow, and see wee not, God, how hee requites his humility? *Ahab* is good for a time, and for a time onely God is gracious unto him. Againe, *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him upon the earth, a perfect and upright man?* and according to the uprightnesse of his servant, see wee not the gracious favour of his Maſter: As great was his godlineſſe, ſo his godlineſſe was great gaine, had the Promiſe of the bleſſings of this life, after the patient loſſe of his goods, receiving them all double, had the aſſurance of the Bleſſings of the life to come: for *I know,* (ſayth hee) *that my Redeemer liveth.* Now who would not deſire a thouſand times rather to bee a IOB then an AHAB; and therefore, who would not be carefull to ſerve GOD like *Iob* with a perfect and an upright heart, without which hee knowes it is impoſſible that he ſhould obtaine his deſire: And indeed when, in the ſolemne Congregation, wee read, in the preſence both of GOD and man, the ſeverall paſſages of pure and undefiled Religion conteyned in this booke of *Pſalmes*, not as expreſſions onely of other mens devotions, but as Patternes of our owne; when wee read, *Lord how doe I love thy Law? It is ſweeter to mee then honey and the honey combe: Morning, and Evening, and noone-tide doe I pray unto thee, and that inſtantly: As the eyes of the Servants looke upon the hands of their Maſters, ſo our eyes waite upon thee O Lord*; And again in my Text, *O Lord, truly I am thy ſervant*: what ſoule trembles not to take theſe

Sacred proteſtations, without ſome competencie of true Piety and holineſſe, leaſt, if wee had no other witneſſe againſt us, our owne heart might too juſtly give our tongue the lie? *Will you ſteale*, (ſayth the Prophet) *commit adulterie, and ſweare falſely, and then will you come, and ſtand before me in this houſe?* And then, even then perhaps, when the Conſcience of theſe, or the like ſinnes ſhall cry for vengeance, dare we then ſay: *O Lord, if I have done any ſuch thing, or if there be any wickedneſſe in my hands, then let mine enemy perſecute my life, and take it.* What is this, but ſolemnely to curſe our ſoules, even then when we come to bleſſe them. *Take heed then unto thy foot,* (ſaith *Salomon*) *when thou goeſt into the Houſe of GOD*: for God is holy, and his houſe is holy, and true and ſincere Holineſſe becommeth his houſe for ever. If any man ſhall heere inquire what meaſure of truth and ſincerity wee muſt attaine too, before we can be partakers of ſo much holineſſe, as ſhall preſent us acceptable unto God, this is a queſtion wherein we may better give our ſelves ſatiſfaction by our piety and prayer, then by our diſcourſe: ſo great is the variety of ſeverall ages and ſexes, of ſeverall natures and graces, of ſeverall callings and educations; that it is impoſſible with ſuch wiſedome and caution, to frame univerſall rules, but that either on the one ſide wee ſhall be too indulgent, or on the other too ſevere: and therefore all the anſwer I will give you, ſhall be this: When we read in the Goſpell, that *Many are called, but few are choſen*, many are called to caſt out devils, and propheſie in the name of CHRIST, and by theſe acts ſhall confidently challenge acquaintance of him, who for all this will not vouchſafe to acknowledge them: when wee read of the five fooliſh Virgins, that they had lamps in their hands, and ſome oyle in their lamps, yet for want of oyle in their veſſels too, for want of a full meaſure of that holineſſe, whereof they thought a little quantity would ſuffice, Heaven gates are ſhut againſt them: When wee reade in St. PAVL, that a man may bee *once enlighned*, and yet ſo ſeeing hee may ſee, as that hee can never truely ſay with SIMEON, *Mine eyes have ſeene thy Salvation*; a man may *taſt of the Heavenly guift*, and yet never ſit downe at the marriage ſupper of the Lambe: Laſtly, when wee read in that great and fearefull day, that CHRIST by his diſcriminating power, having ſet the ſheepe on his right hand, ſhall ſet, not only Wolves and Tygers, but even the Goates alſo, men of a more civill and hopefull demeanour at the laſt; judge you, what manner of men we ought to be in all holineſſe of converſation, before wee can ever ſincerely take up the proteſtation of my Text, *O Lord, truly I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant*. And thus much for the ſecond obſervation, I come now unto a third.

You have ſeene; firſt, that wee muſt ſerve God, ſecondly, that wee muſt ſerve him ſincerely; that which now in the laſt place we are to obſerve is, that

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we muſt ſerve him preſently, *O Lord, truely I am thy ſervant.* 'Tis not enough to ſay, Lord, I have beene thy ſervant: for *if any man draw back* (ſayth GOD) *my ſoule ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* 'Tis not enough to ſay, Lord I will be thy ſervant; for who knowes what alteration a day may may produce? no, time preſent onely, this is the ſure time: and therefore, *Remember now thy Creator,* (ſayth SALOMON) *I will pay my vowes now,* ſaith DAVID. *Exhort one another dayly, while it is called to day,* (ſaith St. PAVL) and *To day if you will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts.* For, if CHRIST our Maſter be the ſame to us *yeſterday, and to day, and for ever*, why ſhould not we his ſervants be the ſame, and reſerve all time for him, not to morrow onely but to day? For come and let us reaſon together; why are we ſo unwilling to render our preſent ſervice unto God, can wee ſay, *What profit is it to ſerve the Lord? Doth* Iob *feare God for naught?* It was the confeſſion of the Devill, doth any man feare God for naught? ſurely *Godlineſſe* (ſaith St. Pavl) *it is profitable for all things*: and *Bleſſed is the man* (ſaith David) *that feareth the Lord, thou ſhalt eate the Labour of thy hands; O well is thee, and happy ſhalt thou be.*

Can wee ſay, what pleaſure is it to ſerve the LORD? The beſt wee can reade of Sinne, is that it hath *Pleaſures for a ſeaſon*, but the ſervice of God hath *Pleaſures for evermore*: a little Oratorie might ſoone ſuffice to declaime upon all the joyes of the World, but the tongue of Men and Angels is not able to ſet foorth the joyes of the Spirit in the ſervice of our GOD: For *wee rejoyce* (ſayth St. PETER,) *even with Ioy unſpeakable*. And ſurely had wee the power to recall times paſt, and the choyce of what dayes, what houres wee would be pleaſed to live againe; would we deſire a reiteration of thoſe earthly, ſenſuall delights; which once to have injoyed hath beene too much, a wholely Impietie it ſelfe durſt not bee ſo impious: Who rather, what ever *Righteouſneſſe* and *peace*, and *joy in the* HOLY GHOST, what ever *conſolation in* CHRIST, *comforts of Love*, or *fellowſhip of the* SPIRIT, whereof our Conſcience to this day hath preſerv'd the ſweet remembrance, theſe are the acts which being moſt pleaſing to our ſoules, we would be beſt pleas'd to recall. May we then cheerefully goe on in the imbracement of thoſe courſes for time preſent, which were we able to call backe time paſt, our owne conſciences ſerve us wit-neſſe we would willingly make choice of.

When the Maſter of the Vineyard queſtioned thoſe Labourers he went to hire, *Why ſtand you all the day idle?* it was ſome excuſe to make anſwer, *becauſe no man hath hyred us.* But if wee ſhall ſuffer our Soules juſtly to be charg'd with the ſame queſtion, are we able ſo much as to pretend the ſame reply? Let us Looke upon our indentures, that ſolemne ſtipulation, when in the waters of regeneration we were firſt conſecrated unto GOD, what promiſes, what vowes

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have beene made in our behalfe; or if wee dare plead the invalidity of ſuch acts, as have beene performed for us in our nonage, then let us looke, ſince we came to have the knowledge both of good and evill, to have the diſcretion to order our owne wayes, upon the word of God, and the Spirit of God; and if theſe earneſts will convince us, that againe and againe wee have beene hired, what anſwer can wee make, if ſtill wee ſhall deſerve to be queſtioned, *why ſtand you idle?* Surely, alwayes thoſe ſinnes are moſt puniſhable, which are moſt inexcuſable. For, what if God let ſome men ſtand idle, and call them not till the laſt houre? What is this to us, who have beene called at the firſt? True indeed it is, that GOD hath his owne liberty, and calls men at what houre he pleaſe; but it is true withall, that at what houre ſoever he cals us we muſt come. And if in things ſecular wee ſtrive all who ſhall be firſt call'd, to riches, to honour, to the ſeverall contentments of the world, ſhall wee be ſo baſely humble, as not to care, though wee come laſt to be *partakers of the Heavenly calling*, to bee *called to the Saints*? Eſpecially, when as we know that God in the ſecret coun-

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councell of his will, as hee hath his ſet times how long hee will call, ſo hee hath his times alſo when upon the ſtopping of our eares he calls backe his calls. *Ieruſalem, Ieruſalem, hadſt thou knowne, at the leaſt in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy Peace: but now they are hidden from thine eyes.* Thou hadſt once Grace offer'd, when to the comfort of thy Soule thou mightſt have ſayd. *O LORD, I am thy Servant*, but now no longer will hee be thy Maſter: This happie opportunitie ſhall never be recall'd; *For the dayes come, when thine Enemies*

ſhall

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ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and lay thee even with the duſt. And why? *because thou kneweſt not the time of thy viſitation.* The neglect of that happy day wherein they were viſited with Mercy, putteth them off unto the terrible day of the Lord, to the viſitation of his Iuſtice. Now becauſe among many of thoſe wayes of God, which are *unſearchable*, this is one, to obſerve how patient hee is with ſome men, giving them day after day, even to the laſt houre, and yet how quicke hee is with others, *come*, come preſently, *and give an account of thy Stewardſhip*; a thouſand times bleſt is that Soule, which every day is prepared for this great day of account.

So then to draw all to a conclusion. We reade in the *Revelation* of foure Angels let looſe, and no ſooner let looſe, but *preſently prepared, for an houre, and a day, and a moneth, and a yeare, to ſley the third part of men.* May we then learne diligence from our enemies, and let not them bee more carefull to deſtroy our Soules, then our ſelves to preſerve them, but may wee all bee prepar'd, at a yeare, at a moneth, at a day, at an houre to ſay, and doe as wee ſay, *O Lord truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant. Amen.*

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THE

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Chap. 9.

THE

THE SECOND SERMON.

Iohn, 21. 22.

If I will that hee tarry till I come, what is that to thee, Follow thou me.

THeſe Words containe a ſharp anſwer of our Saviour to an indiſcreet, and unſeaſonable queſtion of St. Peter.

In the handling whereof

this order I ſhall obſerve. Firſt, I will indeavour to cleare the difficulty of my Text, and ſhew you what is the meaning of our Saviours anſwer, *If I will that he tarry till I come*; and ſecondly, I will commend unto you ſuch obſervations as may prove uſefull to our ſelves. To begin then with the firſt, *If I will that he tarry till I come.*

In the Expoſition of which conditionall ſpeech of CHRIST, I find great variety among Interpreters. Some will admit of no poſitive meaning of the words, but think they were ſpoken onely to put off the inquiſitiveneſſe of PETER, *If I will that he tarry till I come*

come, or as we uſe to ſay; If I will that hee tarry till doomeſday, what is that to thee? not that he intended that IOHN ſhould tarry till he come, but to ſhew that whether hee tarryed or not tarried, that was nothing to PETER. But this expoſition, if wee marke it, will neither well agree with the phraſe of the ſpeech, nor the wiſdome of the Speaker. And therefore others there are who do conceive, that whereas St. PETER was to dye of a violent death, and follow his Maſter to the Croſſe, it might be the meaning of our Saviour to expreſſe, that no ſuch violence ſhould be offered unto St. IOHN, hee ſhould dye of a faire death; fairely and quietly bee buried, and ſo *tarry*, and reſt in his grave till Christs comming unto Iudgement. This is an Expoſition, I confeſſe commended by learned Interpreters on all ſides, yet ſuch as I cannot be perſwaded to approve; Firſt, becauſe it ſeemeth to ſtraine the phraſe of the Text to an unuſuall ſence, *If I will that he tarry*, that is, *tarry* in his grave. Secondly, becauſe thouſands there are who may thus be ſayd to *tarry* till Christ commeth, when as the ſpeech of our Saviour ſeemes plainly to intimate ſomewhat more peculiar unto Iohn. Thirdly, becauſe the ground of the Expoſition is very queſtionable. For howſoever certaine it bee that PETER dyed a violent death, yet whether IOHN dyed of a naturall death or no, it may be doubted. Sure I am, that *Polycrates* in *Euſebius* ſaith, that hee dyed a Martyr; and *Theophylact* confirmeth his ſaying from the words of CHRIST himſelf; who ſpeaking of IAMES and IOHN, ſayth expreſly, that *they ſhall drinke of his Cup, and be Baptiſed with his baptiſme*. Now *Iames* wee know drank ſo deeply of this Cup, that HEROD *ſtretched foorth his hand and killed him with the Sword*: And, as the words

*Lib.*5.*cap* 23.

*In Mat.*20 23.

words of our SAVIOUR doe imply, IOHN muſt pledge him ſo deeply in the ſame Cup, eyther as a Martyr, or at leaſt (as all agree) as a Confeſſor, that in this reſpect the words in my Text cannot ſeeme to conteyne any ſpeciall priviledge of IOHN above PETER, when it is ſayd; *If I will that hee tarry till I come*.

And therefore a third expoſition there is, which though it be refuſed by almoſt every Commentator; yet I ſhall now indeavour to aſſort it. For I find by often experience that it is with weighing of opinions, as with weighing of gold; that which in one paire of ſcales is thought too light, in another will hold weight. The expoſition is this; that however as our Saviour had foretold, PETER ſhould more ſpeedily follow him, follow him to the Croſſe and to the grave, he ſhould make no long tarrying here on earth, but goe hence and be no more ſeene; yet it was his will that IOHN ſhould be longer liv'd, live and tarry till hee came, till hee came to execute exemplary judgment on the unbeleeving Iew, in the deſtruction of their nation, their City, and theyr Temple, till the ſame judgments in fearfull manner ſhould attend the ſinnes of the Gentiles too, till as the Prophet *Ioel* had foretold, having firſt come with a gracious and plentifull offer of his Spirit to be powr'd upon all fleſh, upon the reſiſtance of this Spirit, he ſhould come againe *with wonders in the Heaven, and in the earth; blood, and fire, and pillers of ſmoak.* For the confirmation of which expoſition, three things I ſhall obſerve unto you.

Firſt, that it is uſuall in holy Scripture, to imply poſitive truths in conditionall termes, and it is the ſafeſt way in expounding of hard texts, *obſcura de manifeſtis*, to demonſtrate things obſcure, from the evidence of things manifeſt. Now then manifeſt it is in the ſixt of St. *Iohn*, when our Saviour ſaith to his Diſciples [*Doth this offend you, what and if you ſhould ſee the Sonne of man aſcend up where he was before*:] that his meaning is, The time ſhall come, when, to remove this offence, you ſhall ſee the Sonne of man aſcend. Verſe 12. Manifeſt againe in the 9. to the Romans, when St. *Paul* ſaith, [*What if God willing to ſhew his wrath*:] that his meaning is, It is the will of God, that he may ſhew his wrath, to indure with long ſuffering, the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction. Verſe 22. Manifeſt againe, in the 12. of St. *Luke*, when our Saviour ſaith, [*I am come to* Verſe 49.

ſend fire on earth, and what will I, if it bee already kindled ?] that his meaning is. It is my will, that it ſhall be kindled already. And ſo that when he ſaith here, *If I will that he tarry till I come*, wee may fairely expound this ſpeech with correſpondence to thoſe others: It is my will and pleaſure that he ſhal tarry til I come.

Secondly, we finde mention in holy Scripture, of a ſpeciall comming of CHRIST, whereto theſe words in my Text may ſeeme to have ſpeciall reference. For wee know that CHRIST is ſayd to come two wayes, eyther in perſon, or in power; in perſon he hath come once already in the fleſh, and at the laſt day will come againe in glory. 1. His comming in power, is eyther in the power of his grace, for *Behold*, ſaith he, *I ſtand at the doore and knocke, and if any man heare my voyce and open the doore, I will* come *in, and ſup with him, and he with me*; or in the power of his Iuſtice: and ſo St. IOHN threatens the Church of *Epheſus*. *Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, or I will come againſt thee ſhortly, and remove the Candleſticke out of his place*; but more remarkably have we deſcribed unto us the like manner of his comming in the 24. of St. *Matthew*; parti-

cularly

cularly intimated in theſe words of my Text. For when the Diſciples ask'd our Saviour, *what ſhall be the ſigne of thy comming, and of the end of the world?* To that which they propoſe, *in ſenſu conjuncto*, in an united ſenſe, as beeing falſely perſwaded, that when ever he ſhould come to deſtroy the Temple, then preſently would follow the end of the world too; hee makes anſwer, *in ſenſu diviſo*, in a divided ſenſe; tells them that for the day and houre of his comming in the end of the world; no man ſhould know that: this was a ſecret hidden even from the Angels in Heaven. But as for the day and houre of his comming in ſevere and exemplary manner to viſit the ſinnes of the Iewes, and Gentiles alſo, for not beleeving in his name, hereof he gives them a certaine and particular relation: *Nation ſhall riſe againſt Nation, and Kingdome againſt Kingdome, there* ſhall *be Famines, and Peſtilences, and Earthquakes in divers places,* the *Sunne ſhall bee darkned, and the Moone ſhall not give her light,* and ſuch and ſo *great ſhould be their tribulation in thoſe dayes, as was not from the beginning of the world:* and that they might not ſecurely put theſe evil dayes farre off, and ſay, *The Lord will delay his comming;* he tells them that within one Age, all theſe things ſhould happen: for verily I ſay unto you, *This generation ſhall not paſſe*, that is, the men of this generation now alive ſhall not all dye, and paſſe away, *till all theſe things be fulfilled*; till they *ſhall ſee the ſigne of the Sonne of man comming with great power and glory*. For ſo we finde, that St. JOHN a man of that Generation, did live and tarry till CHRIST thus came to judge the world; liv'd to ſee the raigne of 13. Emperours of *Rome*, from *Auguſtus* unto *Trajane*, during which time, all thoſe judgments denounced by St. *Matthew*, as the ſignes and effects of CHRISTS thus comming in power were accompliſht.

Laſtly, we may take notice of the ſingular providence of Christ, who intending thus ſhortly to come to judge the world, was yet for the good of his Church, graciouſly pleas'd that St. Iohn ſhould tarry till hee came, and that for theſe three reaſons.

First that whereas falſe Teachers were from the beginning crept into the Church, and afterward *Nicolaitans*, *Cerinthians*, *Menandrians*, *Ebionits*, and *Gnoſticks*, had corrupted the doctrine thereof, mingling with Chriſtianity the rites of the Gentiles, and the ceremonies of the Iewes, ſome denying the truth of CHRISTS humanity, others affirming that he was but a meere man; it pleaſed God that after the departure of all the Apoſtles, St. IOHN ſhould *tarry* & continue, to ſtand as a Pillar to uphold the truth, as an Oracle to be conſulted in all difficulties: and for this cauſe, his Goſpell was laſt written, that in ſuch poynts wherein the former Evangeliſts had not given ſo full ſatisfaction to the Church, his Writings might more perfectly reſolve them. Secondly, that he might helpe ſtrengthen the weake faith of the Brethren, amidſt thoſe warres and rumours of warres, amidſt thoſe feares and terrors, which CHRIST was now comming to bring upon the world, and whereof it was his pleaſure, that his owne choſen, for the tryall of their faith, ſhould beare a part; that when they ſhould ſee, as St. IOHN reports of himſelfe, that *He* alſo *was their brother and companion in the Kingdome and patience of* CHRIST IESVS, that *He was caſt into baniſhment for the word and Teſtimony of God*, this might be a ſtrong motive unto thē, conſtantly to poſſeſſe their ſoules with patience. For if the beloved Diſciple, hee that lay in the boſome of his Maſter, if he have ſuffered adverſitie, why ſhould any man complaine: Thirdly, whereas (as St. PAVL informes us) there were even in his dayes, divisions and ſeparations, *one of Cephas*, and *another of Apollo's*, with Hymnes by themſelves, and Doctrines by themſelves; which diviſions afterwards we find by the increaſe of Heretiques, daily to increaſe (for commonly as men ſide in opinion, they will ſide alſo in affection,) hence was it that St. IOHN tarryed ſo long, tarried if it were poſſible to compoſe all differences, and perſwade the faithfull to *keepe the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*. And therefore it is reported of him, even in his decrepite age, his ſpeech and ſtrength almoſt quite ſpent, that whē in one word he would epitomize what ever formerly he had more largely preacht unto them, it was his dayly exhortation to his auditors, *Filioli diligite alterutrum*, *My little Children love one another:* and againe, *My little Children love one another:* that if in ſo great diſtraction of opinions, it was rather to bee wiſht then hop'd for, that they ſhould bee *all of one minde*, yet at leaſt that excellent guift of charity, which *beleeves all things, hopes all things, indures all things*, might *hold them in one accord.* And ſurely it is worth the obſer-

Hieron. in cap 6. ad Galat.

obſervation, that the ſame Diſciple whom Christ lov'd beſt, is moſt frequent and earneſt in his exhortations unto love, to let us underſtand, that one principall effect of Gods love to us, is that wee ſhould love one another: And thus much for the expoſition of my Text: I come now in the ſecond place, to commend ſome obſervations to our ſelves.

Where firſt may it pleaſe you to obſerve, that of all the Apoſtles, as wee finde none more commended, ſo none more reprov'd then St. *Peter*. And the reaſon is, becauſe *Peter* was a man of a quicke, active, and zealous ſpirit, ſo forward, upon all occaſions, to bee doing, that many times, through the exuberancy of his zeale, hee doth that which is amiſſe. For it is a true rule of the Author *De Vocatione Gentium*, *Voluntas mutabilis, quæ non ab incommutabili voluntate regitur, tanto citiùs propinquat iniquitati, quantò acrius intenditur actioni*, the more earneſtly the mutable will of man, not guided by the incommutable wil of God, is intent upon action, the more prone it is to act amiſſe. To teach us, that the more zealous and active wee are, the more carefull we ought to be in the moderation of our actions, leſt partaking of St. *Peters* forward-

Lib.1.c.2.

wardneſſe, wee partake of his ſinne too: (though truly) happier is that man who being zealous to doe well, ſhall ſometime doe amiſſe, then hee who for feare of doing ill, will doe nothing at all. Now if we looke into the particulars of PETERS ſinnes, wee ſhall finde one great fault he had, to be given to queſtion and controll, when it better behooved him to anſwer & obey. When our SAVIOVR in the 16. of St. *Matthew*, had declar'd himſelfe that hee *muſt goe up to* Ieruſalem, *that hee muſt ſuffer many things of the Scribes and Elders, that bee muſt bee killed and riſe againe the third day*, and it had befitted St. PETERS piety to make anſwer with the like prayer which afterward his Maſter us'd: O that this *Cup might paſſe from thee, yet not my will, but thy will bee done*: you ſee how imperiouſly hee takes upon him to rebuke and to controll; *Farre bee it from thee, this ſhall not bee unto thee*. When our SAVIOUR had now guirt himſelfe, and told PETER, that he muſt waſh his feet, and it had befitted him in wiſedome, though hee knew not yet the reaſon of this Ceremonie, to make anſwere, *Bee it unto mee as thou wilt*; you ſee how in a ſhew of humilitie, hee ſheweth indeed ſome pride and diſobedience, *Thou ſhalt never waſh my feet.* And heere, in this ſtory, when our Saviour ſayth unto him, *Follow thou me,* and it had befitted his devotion, upon the remembrance how lately hee had played the run-away, to make anſwer, *Lord I will follow thee whereſoever thou goeſt:* you ſee how preſently he forgets himſelfe, and begins to queſtion after *Iohn; Lord what ſhall this man doe?* Now becauſe we know *Peters* infirmities were not his alone, and though wee have warning from him, yet dayly wee are prone to commit the like errors againe, Let me commend unto you that ſober exhortation of St. *Iames*, *Fratres mei ne ſitis multi magiſtri. My brethren be not many maſters.* Be not too forward to queſtion and controll, what ſhall this man, and this thing doe? and this and this be farre from us, it ſhall not be ſo. For however the great Maſters, in Church and Commonwealth, over our ſoules and bodies, bee not like *Peters* Maſter, have not an infallibility in all the directions they propoſe; yet becauſe ſuch as they are, we are commanded to obey them, and it behoveth our Chriſtian modeſty to bee perſwaded, that they know better how to command us, then we to adviſe them. Let us be very wary upon what termes wee contradict or diſobey; Leſt God in defence of thoſe higher powers, with whom wee are but too prone to conteſt, may give us the like check, which once he gave unto his people Iſrael; *They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me.* Or if there may bee ſome things whereof the wiſedomes of ſome men cannot bee ſo well perſwaded, (as indeed while men are men, it is not to bee expected in all things that great men ſhould bee Gods) let us not fooliſhly heape the coales of other mens fires upon our owne heads, and with too much heate and violence make the ſinne of our complaining, greater than the matter whereof wee doe complain. No, rather when we know, that *there is no evill in the City, which the Lord hath not done*, in all the evils wch either we feele or feare, let us lift up our eyes unto the Lord for a redreſſe: for certainly with him our humble prayer is able to prevaile more, then tenne thouſand ſtomackfull complaints. And thus much for my firſt obſervation, I come now unto a ſecond.

Where in the ſecond place we may obſerve, that however when we read the bare queſtion of St. *Peter*,

our charity might eaſily b
ſatisfied, as ſome of the an-
cient have conceiv'd, tha
St. Iohn having heereto-
fore askt at the requeſt o
St. Peter, to put the reſ
of the Diſciples out o
feare, *Lord who is it tha*
ſhall betray thee? So *Peter*
now by way of friendly
requitall, that *Iohn* alſo
might know his end, and
by what death hee was to
glorifie God, maketh the
like requeſt for him, *Ma-*
ſter what ſhall this man doe?
a requeſt wherein admit-
ting of this faire para-
phraſe, we may finde mat-
ter rather to commend then
cenſure him. Yet when we
read the anſwer of our Sa-
viour, that wee may know

he ſeeth not as man ſeeth, he judgeth not as man judgeth: whereas our ignorance would have ſayd, *We finde no fault in this man*, no ſin in this queſtion; his knowledge finds as many ſinnes as words. But foure words did *Peter* utter, *Domine hic autem quid?* which wee more largely tranſlate, *Lord what ſhall this man doe?* and yet in theſe foure words there are foure ſinnes. Firſt, a ſin of preſumption, *Lord what ſhall this man doe?* as if CHRIST would have forgotten S. *Iohn*, unleſſe *Peter* had remembred him. Secondly, a ſinne of curioſitie, *Lord, what ſhall this man doe?* as if becauſe *Iohn* knew what ſhould become of *Peter*, *Peter* muſt needs know what ſhould become of *Iohn*. Thirdly, a ſinne of repining, *Lord, what ſhall this man doe?* as if *Peter* had no mind to follow *Chriſt*, unles *Iohn*, who had always heretofore beene his companion, might goe along with him; and laſtly, a ſin of negligence, *Lord, wha ſhall this man doe?* as if i were fitting for him now to inquire after others, when as the ſtrictneſſe o his Maſters charge migh have put him in minde rather to looke to himſelfe. All which ſinnes ſeeme to bee expreſt or intimated in the anſwer of our SAVIOUR. *If I will*, or i is my will *that hee ſhal* *tarry till I come*; a check for his Preſumption: *Hee ſhall tarry*, and *you ſhall follow mee*; a check for his repining: Whether he tarry or tarry not, *what is that to thee?* A check for his curioſity; and laſtly, *Follow thou me*; which being a repetition of the ſame charge immediatly given him before, implyeth a check for his negligence. So that when we ſee in this caſe of Peter here, and every day in our owne queſtions, our owne anſwers, our owne actions, the caſe may be the ſame; how many Sinnes the knowledge of God takes notice of, which otherwiſe our ignorance would never have ob-

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obſerv'd. He *ſearcheth the hearts and reynes*, and weighs each word we ſpeake; how ought this to perſwade us carefully to take heed unto our wayes, to *worke out our Salvation with feare and trembling*, & in ſuch things wherein we think we have done well, ever to bee jealous leſt wee have done ſomewhat amiſſe.

When wee reade the ſeverall Apologies of the Church of *Rome*, except onely for the foule Sinne of his Denyall, for all other infirmities of *Peter*; Charge him with his impetious controlling of his Maſter, oppoſing his own nay unto CHRISTS yea, *This ſhall not be unto thee*, ſo that our Saviour with indignation gives him this ſharpe anſwer, *Get thee behind mee Satan*; yet *Bellarmine* will excuſe him *with an error in ſenſu non affectu*, though he might erre in his underſtanding, not apprehending the juſt reaſons of CHRISTS going to Suffer at *Jeruſalem*, yet there was no error, (ſayth hee) in the ſincerity of his affection; though in truth great was the error of his affection, ſo to deſire to ſhew his love to CHRIST, as thereby to take a courſe to bereave himſelfe of the benefit of CHRISTS love to him. Charge him with his indiſcreet Petition, wherein the Text expreſ-

ſeth, that hee *knew not wha*
hee ſaid, when he ſaid,
Lord, let us heere make thre
Tabernacles; hoping, as St
Chryſoſtome conceives, tha
if hee could have perſwaded his Maſter to dwell
there, he would never have
remov'd to goe and ſuffer
at *Ieruſalem*; yet *Bellarmine*
will excuſe him with a *Potuit errare, non potuit peccare*. Perhaps he might erre,
(ſayth hee) but ſurely he
could not Sinne; for *hee*
knew not what he ſaid: as if
it were no ſinne for a man
to ſay, he knowes not what.
Charge him with his over-confident Proteſtation, as
wee ſee afterward by the
cowardly event, *Though I*
ſhould dye with thee, yet

Homil. 57 in Mat.

will I not deny thee; and yet not long after denies him againe and againe, and that before hee was in any danger of death; yet *Bellarmine* will excuſe him with an *aut nullus hic lapſus, aut amoris exceſſus*, either hee was not to blame at all, or gently to be blam'd onely for an exceſſive expreſſion of his love though we may eaſily conjecture at the greatneſſe of his ſinne, by the greatneſſe of his puniſhment, for if Peter had not ſo boldly offer'd to dye with Christ, Christ would never have ſuffer'd that he ſhould ſo ſhamefully deny him. Laſtly, charge him with this Preſumpruous, querulous, curious queſtion in the Text; *Lord, what ſhall this man doe?* yet *Bellarmine* will excuſe him, and of all the Sinnes beforementioned, finde him guilty onely of a little Curioſitie, and that with an *If* too, *Si curioſitas dicenda venia digniſſima,* If you will needs finde him guilty of a little ſinne of curioſitie, ſurely it was but a veniall ſinne. So zealous in all things are they in the defence of St. PETER, as if his credit were theyr own. Now when wee reade, and heare theſe things, & wonder at their boldneſs in making ſuch ſtrong Apologies in his behalfe, as if indeed *Peter* had not beene ſo much to blame for any deſert of his to be reprov'd, as his Maſter for reproving him; let us beware leſt in the like kinde making the like weake excuſes for our ſelves, we make theyr Sins our owne. Let us beware that we be not too forward to cenſure and controll, to intermeddle with things in Church or State, which are too high for us, to ſpeak evill of that we doe not underſtand, and then think to excuſe all *with an error in ſenſu non affectu*; if our judgements may be miſtaken, yet our affections are well devoted. For it is a great error in mens affections to be ſtrong in the proſecution of ſuch things

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wherein their judgements are but weake. Let not the commonneſs of many ſins cauſe us to give indulgence to our ſelues in the committing thereof, becauſe they are ſo common, and then excuſe all *with a potui errare, non peccare*, It was my errour, and *in many things we offend all*, but it was not ſo great a ſin. For ſurely, there is no readier way to make ſinnes great, then thus to leſſen them. And indeed, ſtrange it is to conſider, how juſt and ſtrickt wee are in point of Doctrine, and will acknowledge no ſinne to be veniall, and yet how unjuſt and licentious wee are in point of Practiſe, as if wee thought few ſinnes to bee mortall. Laſtly, when by the faithfull diſpencers of GODS word, we ſhall often heare our Sinnes anatomized, & multiplyed to more particulars, then wee can ſodainly diſcover, while wee looke upon them only in the groſſe. Let us not breake out into tearmes of indignation, and ſay, *Wee hate theſe men*, becauſe they aggravate our ſinnes, and *Propheſie unto us evill and not good*: No, rather let us hate thoſe Sinnes; for which wee deſerve theſe evils. And when we know, that the *heart of man is deceitfull above all things*, and a hard matter it is for any man to know the worſt of himſelf, if wee ſhall ſometime heare more then our ſelf-indulgence will eaſily beleeve, let us yet bee perſwaded that wee deſerve more then wee have heard of, and humbly take up the Meditation and Prayer of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Who knoweth how oft he offends, O cleanſe thou mee from my ſecret faults.* And thus much for a Second obſervation. I come now unto a third, and I have done.

And my laſt Obſervation, omitting many others, ſhall bee this; That the great Mercies of God are commonly attended with great Iudgements: For therefore, doth our Saviour here mention his comming in my Text; becauſe having come once already to offer great Mercy to the *Iewes*, ſuch as had never beene offered before, to offer himſelfe to as many as would beleeve in him that they might not periſh but have everlaſting life; hee intended to come ſhortly againe to ſhew great judgements, ſuch as hee had never ſhewed before, judgements ſo much the more ſeverely to be executed, by how much they had beene the more regardleſſe of his Mercies. Thus if you looke backe on the firſt judgements on the Angels, Saint AVGVSTINE will tell you, *tantò execrabiliùs beneficii Dei*

In Iohan. Tract. 100

Dei ingrati, quantò beneficentiùs ſunt creati, That the more excellent was the perfection of theyr Creation, the more execrable was theyr Sinne, the more ſevere, and exemplary was theyr puniſhment, or if ye looke on the firſt judgement upon man, the ſame *Auguſtine* will tell you, *Hoc tam leve præceptum ad obſervandum tantò majori injuſtitia violatum, quantò facileori obſervantia poterat cuſtodiri*: That Gods firſt command was with ſo much the greater injuſtice violated, with ſo much the greater juſtice puniſht, by how much with the greater facilitie, and the promiſe of the greater Happineſſe, it might

Civit. Dei lib. 14. cap 12.

might have been obſerv'd. Thus if we looke upon the Seaven Churches in St. IOHN, as wee read a declaration of great Mercy, the *Tabernacle of GOD came downe among Men*, with *Starres and golden Candleſtickes*: So wee heare a denunciation of great Iudgements too; *Repent, or I will come and remoove the Candleſticke*, to the Church of *Epheſus*: *Repent for I will come and fight againſt thee*, to the Church of *Pergamus*; *Repent, or I will kill thy Children with death*, to the Church of *Thyatira*. Now when we ſeriouſly conſider what our SAVIOUR ſayth, *Hee that reades theſe things let him underſtand*, and what

St. JOHN hath added, *Hee that hath eares to heare, let him heare what the Spirit ſaith to the ſeaven Churches*, (for the caſe of theſe Churches is a leading caſe for all the Churches of the World;) Let us remember that all theſe things have been ſaid and done to ſerve as enſamples unto us. That ſince the reformation of our Church, great have been the manifeſtations of Gods mercy, great peace, great plenty, and that which is greater then all this, great ſalvation in the free and ſincere diſpenſation of the great myſteries of Godlineſſe, wee cannot but all thankfully acknowledge. And if my obſervation (as certaine it is) be true, that great judgments attend great mercies, upon the neglect of ſo great Salvation, that great Viſitations will enſue wee cannot but be afraid. But yet it is not for mee to tell you the times and ſeaſons of thoſe judgements, which God hath reſerved in his owne power. For as the exhalations ariſing from the Earth and Seas, wee all know to bee the cauſe, of thoſe clouds which produce raine and ſtormes, yet no man dares take upon him to aſſure, That this day, or this houre it will raine, or this moneth, this yeare will bee a great flood;

So though wee know the exhalations of our ſinnes rayſe clouds of ſeparation betweene God and us, yet how long theſe clouds will be gathering together before they produce a generall ſtorme, it exceeds the apprehenſion of man to be able to determine. And indeed hitherto, whether in the courſe of our Religion in this laſt Age, there have been ebbes or flowes, whether wee have increaſt or diminiſht the talents God hath given us, though many men raſhly take upon them to give judgement, yet I think it is not ſo eaſie a matter to decide. And becauſe in this argument every man almoſt preſumes to ſpend his conjecture, I hope the commonneſſe of the Preſumption will excuſe me, if I ſhall diſcover mine. And for my part I am perſwaded, that there is no ſuch *iniquity in Iacob*, no ſuch *tranſgreſſion* in our *Iſrael*, no ſuch tranſgreſſion exceeding the tranſgreſſions of our Fathers, even in the beſt times that can be nam'd, that for this reaſon wee ſhould have any more cauſe then they to feare, that God who hath hitherto come graciouſly to us *with his Love*, ſhould now ſhortly bend his bow and whet his Sword, and come upon us *with the Rod*. Neceſſary I confeſſe it is, that with the declaring of

GODS juſt judgements unto ſinners, wee ſhould often threaten and humble the Soules of men; but yet ſo farre to diſhearten the Lords people with the feare of generall imminent viſitations, as to bring them into diſlike of the Church and State wherein they live, to occaſion them to remove by hundreds and thouſands into remote and deſolate parts of the world, as if they could any where bee more ſafe then where they are, ſurely this is a point of zeale ſtrain'd ſo farre beyond diſcretion, that I am perſwaded GOD himſelfe doth not approve it. 'Tis poſſible I confeſſe on the one ſide *to daube with untempered morter*, and ſay, *Peace, peace, when there is no peace*; but on the other ſide let mee tell you, 'Tis not impoſſible for men to make ZEDECHIAS hornes, and ſay; Thus, and thus ſhall the Lord puſh, when the Lord hath not ſent them, and thereby as the Prophet complaines, *Make the heart of the righteous ſad, whom the LORD hath not made ſad.* For mine own part, as long as wee are not able (and bleſſed be GOD that wee are not able) to demonſtrate the like ſinnes of Idolatry, cruelty, injuſtice, and oppreſſion, wherwith God by all the Prophets chargeth his

Ezech. 13, 22.

his people *Iſrael*, before ever hee threatens to come and viſit them; I cannot be perſwaded, that any man hath juſt warrant to denounce the like judgements againſt us. And thus farre have I declar'd my ſelfe, not that I would flatter the Times, or ſooth men up in theyr tranſgreſſions; for wee know, that every day God for ſingle ſinners hath ſingle viſitations, though the great and terrible day of his Wrath be never ſo farre off. What? becauſe wee feare not any judgement on the whole Land, ſhall any Sinner therefore not be afraid of judgement on himſelf? This is, as if a Soldier in the warres, thinking

king himſelfe ſafe from the Cannon, ſhould therefore deſperatly runne upon a volly of ſmall ſhot, when as we know a little Piſtoll will kill a man, as well as a great Ordnance. But thus much have I ſpoken for three cauſes. Firſt, that I might adviſe men to bee more wary in theyr comparative invectives againſt Sinne. For *cry aloud and ſpare not, tell Iudah of his ſinnes, and Iſrael of his tranſgreſſions*; but ſhall wee therefore, to the heavie prejudice of the government of the State, and if the imputation were true, to the inexcuſable diſhonour of our owne profeſſion, to whoſe charge the Soules of men are committed, if we that are appointed to build up ſhall ſuffer them to fall downe; ſhall wee therefore ſay, never more ſinne, never more tranſgreſſion, never more feare of CHRISTS comming unto Iudgement? For who hath kept a booke of remembrance? who knowes how oft wee have offended? or who knowes how oft our Fathers have offended? Nay, who knowes but that GOD may bee offended for want of our thankfulneſſe for the increaſe of his grace and favor toward us, which we will not be perſwaded to acknowledge? Secondly, that I might a little moderate the zeale and paſſions of men. For as wee are equally beholding to the motion and influence of the Moone, if that bee the ſecond cauſe, ſometime for withdrawing the waters to an ebbe, as well as ſometime for raiſing them up unto a flood: ſo ſurely it is as commendable an act, though not ſo popular, ſometime to allay the affections of men, when they begin to overflow, as well as ſometime to raiſe and ſtirre them up, when they are at a low ebbe. And indeed, if the minds of men bee once ſtrongly perſwaded, that daylie the World growes worſe and worſe, every man will take upon him to finde out the cauſe, and cõmendable it were, would they only conceive in generall, that the *imaginations of the heart of Man were continually* proner and proner unto *evill*, but when they preſume to goe on unto particulars, and one pointeth at the Doctrine, another at the diſcipline of the Church, one at the government, another at the Governours both in Church and Common-wealth, this is that, which in time may bring all unto confuſion, and with their owne hands help to pluck downe thoſe Iudgments, which they pretend to be moſt carefull to keepe off: when as if the minds of men were perſwaded better things, and ſuch as accompany ſalvation, would they beleeve that it is with our Religion as with our wealth, though many men be *miſerable, and poore, and naked*, yet for the moſt part there is more gold, more ſilver, more precious ſtones, more knowledge, more piety, more men that have given up their names to CHRIST; this might be a ſtrong motive to retaine them in a good opinion of the Church and ſtate wherein they live, & to cauſe them to confeſſe with IACOB, *Surely the Lord was in this place, and we were not aware* *of sin.* Lastly, that this may ſerve as a ſpurre to our Piety and devotion, and cauſe us thus to diſpute and argue with our ſelves. Doth Religion daily grow up from ſtrength to ſtrength, and ſhall I ſtand onely at a ſtay? Is there every where more underſtanding, more plentifull meanes of Salvation in the free and ſincere diſpenſation of the Word and Sacraments, and ſhall I bee a ſtranger in Iſrael, and know little or nothing of theſe things? Have the *hyred Servants in my Fathers houſe now bread enough and ſhall I periſh for hunger?* And indeed, what ſtronger argument to perſwade us to be proficients in Chriſts

Schoole, then to ſee and acknowledge the towardlines of our fellow ſchollers.

So then to draw all to a concluſion. We read in the booke of *Numbers*, when BALAK requeſted BALAAM, *Come curſe me* IACOB, *and come and defie Iſraell:* that BALAAM returnes him anſwer from the mouth of GOD, *How ſhall I curſe whom* GOD *hath not curſed, or how ſhall I defie whom the Lord hath not defied?* Thus in the handling of this common place of CHRISTS comming unto Iudgment, if the heate of ſome mens zeale ſhall call upon mee to curſe IACOB, and defie *Iſrael*, and in the voyce of thunder

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threaten the ſuddaine executions of Gods wrath, my faire anſwer is, *How can I curſe* whom, from my heart I am perſwaded, *God hath not curſed*, or *how can I defie, whom the Lord hath not defied?* All that I will ſay is this, that as the generall goodneſſe and religion of this Land may cauſe us, according to the wonted mercies of Almighty God, to conceive a faire hope, that there are no generall viſitations neare at hand, ſo I beſeech you, the better to vindicate the not unqueſtionable truth of ſo good a Paradox, let mee crave the ayd of your Piety, to make a ſtrong party againſt any man that ſhall oppoſe us, and let each ſingle man in ſingleneſſe of heart, be ſo carefull of his owne particular, that wee may all daily *preſent our ſelves as a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God,* that wee may *come behind* our Fathers *in no guift,* that we *may bee confirmed unto the end,* and *found blameleſſe at the comming of our Lord* IESVS CHRIST.

Amen.

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THE THIRD SERMON

JOHN 1. 16.

And Grace for grace.

WHen the fulneſſe of time was come, ſo God loued the World, that hee ſent forth his owne Sonne; and (that which ſets forth the rareneſſe of this Love) in this fulneſſe of time, when the fulneſſe of Sinne did now cry for the full vyals of God's wrath, behold! where Sinne abounded, Grace did much more abound; GOD *ſent forth his Sonne, full of Grace and Truth.* And that this fulneſſe of his might not ſerve to upbraid the empty world, and to condemne it, but that the world therby might be ſaved; it was not onely *Plenitudo abundantiæ*, a filling fulneſſe; but *plenitudo redundantiæ*, a flowing fulneſſe. *Of his fulneſſe have wee all received, and Grace for grace.* Verſ. 14.

In which words, two Parts in the generall may bee obſerved: Firſt, the Fountaine of bliſſe, from whence all Happineſſe is derived to us, *Of his fulneſſe have wee all received*; and ſecondly, in my Text, the ſtreames which flow from this Fountaine, commended to us by way of excellencie in the emphaſis of this little particle *And*, *Of his fulneſſe have wee all received*; And that of no ordinary common fulneſſe, nay not onely, *Truth for truth*, a great happineſſe to know our Maſters will; but that then which the goodneſſe of the Father hath vouchſafed heere no greater bleſſing to his own Sonne, *Grace for grace*; that by the fulneſſe of *Truth*, knowing the will of our heavenly Father, by the fulneſſe of *Grace*, wee may bee ſo happie to fulfill it.

Now becauſe the words of my Text will hardly be divided, for they are coincident, *Grace* and *grace*; it ſhall ſuffice me to make a diviſion of the ſence thereof; and three expoſitions there are, all concurring to make one compleat Commentarie, which ſhall ſerve mee in ſtead of ſo many Parts; in the handling whereof, I hope I ſhall not need to crave your attention; ſurely, the very name of *Grace*, the moſt acceptable bleſſing, which, next unto his Sonne, God ever give unto his Saints, will challenge it; and upon the delivery of ſo happie an Ambaſſage from Heaven ſolicite your thoughts with the like meditation, which old Ely put into the mouth of Samuel, *Speake* LORD, *for thy ſervant heareth.*

Now then three Expoſitions there are, and the firſt is this: *Of his fulneſſe have wee all received, and Grace for grace,* that is, variety of Graces, ſome one grace ſome another. For, as no man hath receiv'd the fulneſſe of Christ, but of his fulneſſe onely, ſo of his fulneſſe every man receives not grace alike, but Grace for grace. *Though the Spirit be the ſame, and the ſame Lord,* (ſayth St. Paul,) *yet there*

there are diverſities of gifts, and difference of adminiſtrations, and GOD hath ſet in his Church ſome Prophets, ſome Apoſtles, ſome Teachers, ſome Interpreters. For the Church of CHRIST is a myſticall body; and a Body (ſayth hee) is not one member but many. And as in the Naturall body all motion, the Phyſitian will tell you, comes from the Head, and yet every member hath a different motion by it ſelfe; So in our Spirituall head CHRIST JESUS wee all live and move, and have our being, and yet divers are the motions of the different members of this body. *Similes* Minut. Felix. *univerſi videntur, & tamen diſſi-*

diſsimiles inter ſe univerſi invenimur. As in the Bodies, ſo in the Soules of men alſo, there is a kind of unlike likeneſſe; and not onely in the graces of illumination, but of Sanctification too, every man almoſt hath a different manifeſtation of one and the ſame Spirit. *In my Fathers houſe* (ſayth CHRIST) *there are many manſions*, as in his upper Houſe of glory many manſions, ſo in his lower houſe of Grace alſo many manſions: Some, wee ſee, more humble, others more temperate, ſome more devout, others more charitable, ſome more mercifull, others more juſt. In ABRAHAM wee reade

Hieron. Dialog. ad verſ. Pelagium.

reade the ſingular commendations of Faith; in IOB, of Patience; in MOSES, of Meekneſs; in PHINEES, of Zeale; not that thoſe graces are infus'd alone, but oft-times eminent alone. For as a candle, which enlightens the whole roome within, ſhineth onely through the window to thoſe which are without; ſo in divers men there are different kinds of clariſtories, wherby the graces of GOD which inlighten the whole Soule within, doe yet but in part ſhine foorth to others. *Et qui non habet omnia, non condemnatur ex eo quod non habet, ſed juſtificatur ex eo quod poſſidet.*

Hieron. Dialog. adverſ. Pelageum.

And hee that wants the eminencie in himſelfe of many a commendable vertue in another man, ſhall not yet bee condemn'd for what hee hath not, but juſtified rather for what hee hath. *Vnum iter, at perveniendi quò cupias multa compendia.* For though there bee but one high-way to Heaven, yet there are many pathes therein. IOHN BAPTIST came neyther eating nor drinking, the Sonne of man came eating and drinking: and yet both came the right way. Surely then the way to Heaven is not ſo narrow, but that in reſpect of the different expreſſions of one and the ſame Grace, wee may

Hieron. Epiſt. 11. *ad Ageruchiam.*

walke thither as well hand in hand, as ſtep after ſtep. To give you a quicke inſtance in the preſent affection of many vertuous and good men. For as no man is ſo farre to ſequeſter himſelfe from the publique affaires of Church and Commonwealth, but even in the moſt private condition is to labour and pray that we may all leade a peaceable and quiet life in all godlineſſe and honeſty, to joy or grieve, according as the happie or unhappie ſucceſſe of things ſhall miniſter juſt cauſe; So I perſwade my ſelf many thouſands there are of piouſly devoted men, ſome who mourne to behold the ſtreames of ungodlineſſe over-flowing the Soules of a world of men, and how farre the beſt come ſhort of the perfection of that Holineſſe, whereto the ſincerity of that Truth which wee profeſſe directs us: and yet ſome againe who doe rejoyce to ſee, amidſt a crooked and froward generation, how many ſoules there are yet every where given up unto Gods ſervice; to ſee the free and ſincere acknowledgement of that Sacred truth, the zealous and painfull diſpenſation whereof daily produceth happie effects of righteouſneſſe, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, more perhaps then in five

times

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times ſo great a circuit in any part of the whole Chriſtian world. And ſurely whatever, for what cauſes ſoever, may be our owne apprehenſion of our own condition, when time ſhall have buried all theſe ſmall occaſions in forgetfulneſs, Poſterity will live to make an honourable remembrance even of theſe dayes of ours, which our ingratitude can now hardly mention but with ſpleene. Now then, ſhall hee that mournes ſay, Woe be to you that rejoyce? Or ſhall hee that rejoyceth, deſpiſe the ſorrow of the mourner? No ſurely, are they not both Brethren, why then ſhould they ſtrive?

Godly joy and godly ſorrow, they are but Grace for grace, both different effects of one and the ſame Spirit. As then upon the view of the ſecond Temple the Story tels us many *wept with a loud voyce*, and many *ſhowted aloud for joy*, all equally affected to the good and welfare of that State, ſo now whether we mourne for the happineſs wee want, or joy in the preſent happineſſe we doe injoy, let us give each to other the right hand of fellowſhip, and in our daily Prayers ſalute both Church and State in the language of my Text, and ſay *Grace, grace unto them.*

Againe, as in divers men there are different kinds of Grace, ſo different degrees too; there are Babes, and there are men in CHRIST, and there is milke for babes, and ſtrong meat for men. For the Church of GOD (ſaith St. PAVL) is like to a *great houſe, and in a great houſe there are not onely veſſels of gold and ſilver, but veſſels of wood and earth.*

Now as in zeale we are all to indeavour to be made of the beſt mettle, ſo in charity wee are to hope well of the worſt too, leſt the veſſell of ſilver, while it ſmites againſt the veſſell of clay, ſtriving to breake that, may bruiſe it ſelfe. *Spiritus Dei ſuper aquas ferebatur, & naſcentem mundum parturiebat*, The Spirit of God mov'd, not onely upon the high Heavens, but the low waters too; and as we read in the Creation, that *God call'd the light Day*, and *the darkeneſſe Night*; yet when hee joynes them both together, the denomination followes the better part, and *the Evening and the Morning make a Day*; ſo in the Soules of many men, though there be evening as well as morning, darkeneſſe as well as light, though there bee great diſobedience; if there be great repentance

Hieron. Ocean. cap 3.

too; Such is the goodneſſe of Almighty GOD, as that the darkneſſe ſhall be ſwallowed up of light, and the Evening and the Morning make a Day. Where GOD ſowes plentifully hee expects plenty, and where hee ſowes ſparingly hee is content ſparingly to reape; for five Talents perhaps he would not have been pleas'd with the increaſe of foure more, and yet for two hee accepts two. For as the Church of GOD is like JACOBS ladder, though none but Angels climbe it, yet there are ſome aſcending, ſome deſcending, ſome above, ſome below, and all upon the Ladder;

ſo the Grace of God it is like Manna in the Wilderneſſe. So ſtrict an exactor is hee of the utmoſt of all that wee can doe, as that hee that gathers much, Zacharie and Elizabeth, who all theyr life long feared God, and walked blameleſs, ſhall have nothing over, no workes of Supererrogation, no Treaſure for the Church; and yet ſo mercifull is hee unto thoſe on whom he will have Mercy, as that hee that gathers little, the Thiefe upon the Croſſe, not till his laſt houre bethinking himſelfe of his laſt end, though hee take up but a ſhort *Memento*;

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Memento, Remember me when thou commest into thy Kingdome, ſhall have no lacke.

Let not him then that is now reaching the top of the Ladder, deſpiſe him, who perhaps is yet but on his knees humbly creeping to the foot. Let not the tall Cedar, who once himſelfe hee knoweth was but a broken Reede, for what hath hee which hee hath not received, let him not fall heavie on the ſmoaking Flax. For even babes in CHRIST, they are the children of GOD, and may live to become Men; and where the ſtomacke is not able to digeſt ſtrong meate, life a while may bee maintain'd with milk. You know what a ſmart anſwer our SAVIOUR gave St. PETER, whẽ partly out of good will he was but a little inquiſitive after JOHN, *Maſter what ſhall hee doe? What's that to thee? follow thou mee.* Surely then, what excuſe ſhall wee make, who not onely by way of inquiſition, but by way of cenſure and deſpaire, as any mans life and actions, nay (ſuch is the touchineſſe of this waſpiſh age) but his opinion onely ſhall but a little thwart us, preſently wee give him over, with a Lord what ſhall become of this man, when as indeed the conſcience of our owne infirmities might

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farre better buſie our meditations to inquire, *Lord, what ſhall become of mee ?* and I could wiſh that golden ſentence of the Heathen were imprinted in the heart of every Chriſtian; *Optimum ego et emendatiſſimum exiſtimo, qui cæteris ita ignoſcit, tanquam ipſe quotidie peccet; ita peccatis abſtinet, tanquam nemini ignoſcat.* Hee indeed is a right good man, who in all things is ſo favourable to the ſinnes of others, as if himſelfe were the greateſt ſinner; and yet ſo ſevere and ſtrict unto himſelfe, as if hee would favour no man. And thus much for the firſt expoſition of my

Plin. l. 8. Epiſt. 22.

Text, I come now unto the ſecond.

2 *Expoſition.*

And of his fulneſſe haue wee all receiued, and grace for grace: that is, grace upon grace, grace after grace, firſt one grace then another. For God who gave not the Spirit by meaſure to his Sonne, gives it by meaſure and portions to his Saints; which like good ſeed ſowne into good ground brings foorth firſt the blade, then the eare, then the full corne in the eare; firſt the will, and then the deed; firſt begins the deed, and then perfects it. And therefore *give diligence*, ſaith St. Peter, *and adde to* *your faith vertue, to vertue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godlineſſe*: and that wee may know there are many and high degrees to bee aſcended before we come unto the height of grace, to that full aſſurance, whereof fondly oftimes we ſecure our ſelves even at the firſt ſtep, you ſee againe he doubles the ſame caution, *Give diligence to make your calling and Election ſure.* And St. PAUL often, *Let the word dwell richly in you, in all wiſedome; Let your love abound more and more, That you may bee rooted, and built up, and ſtabliſhed in the faith; That you may be holy* *and unreproovable in the ſight of God; That hee may preſent unto himſelfe a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle.* Indeed it is the deſire of moſt men, to be partakers of Gods grace, ſo much at leaſt as may enlighten them a little, give them a taſte of the heavenly guift, and keepe them from deſpaire; and then are they ready to ſay unto their ſoule, *Soule take thy eaſe:* for thou haſt now enough, grace enough, layd up in ſtore. But the earneſt and conſtant deſire of grace for grace, and grace upon grace, to follow our Petitions as St. HIEROM did (with a *peto ut accipiam, & cum accepere rurſus*

Avarus ſum ad accipienda beneficia dei. Nec ille deficit in dando, nec ego ſatior in accipiendo. Ad Creſiphor. adv. Pelag.

peto,) dayly doe I aske the grace of God, and when I have obtain'd what I aske for, dayly doe I aske the ſame againe, and as long as hee is well pleaſed to grant, never will I give over my deſire, this a rare zeale: though yet in truth better have no talent, then wrap it in a Napkin. For God will not bee content with his owne, hee muſt have intereſt; where hee ſoweth grace, he expects to reape grace for grace: and therefore having once taſted of the heavenly guift, let us dayly ſo hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſſe, as that wee may bee filled with the Spirit.

For wee are to obſerve,

that as in GOD there is a fulneſſe, if I may ſo ſpeak, of capacitie, fulneſſe of juſtice, fulneſſe of mercy, fulneſſe of wiſedome, fulneſſe of power, all fulneſſe at the full, becauſe hee is infinitely full; as in CHRIST there is a fulneſſe of ſatietie, ſuch a fulneſſe as was fitted and proportioned by the will of his Deitie, ſuch a fulneſſe as did abundantly ſatiate the will and deſire of his humanitie; a fulneſſe without meaſure, if compar'd to that ſmall portion vouchſafed to the greateſt of the Saints: and yet a fulneſſe which had meaſure and proportion, if compar'd unto the infinite fulnes of the Deity.

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Bernard. Homil. 3.

Deus quamvis omnipotens non potuit vel inæqualem ſibi gignere filius, vel æqualem condere creaturam. It was impoſſible that even the omnipotencie of God, ſhould eyther beget the divine perſon of his Sonne unequall, or create his humane nature equall to himſelfe: ſo in the Saints of God there muſt bee a fulneſſe too, a fulneſſe of competency, fulneſſe of Faith, and fulneſſe of workes alſo, that while we beleeve in him who juſtifieth a ſinner, wee may daily labour the reformation of our ſinnes. *Behold*, ſaith Christ, *I ſtand at the doore and knocke: and if any man heare my voyce, and* *open the doore, I will come in, and ſup with him, and he with me.* Here then you ſee there muſt bee a mutuall entertainment of ſupper for ſupper, fulneſſe for fulneſſe, for indeed then onely is this Feaſt rightly prepared, when as well God ſups with us, as we with him, he on the delight of our obedience, we on the confidence of his.

True indeed it is, that if wee looke into the empty world, a little goodneſſe may ſoone raiſe us unto a Phariſaicall oſtentation, and ſerve to juſtifie our ſelves by negatives, *Lord I thanke thee*, that I am not thus nor thus, nor like unto this Publicane; and thinke that wee have grace enough, if wee can poynt out any man more graceleſſe then our ſelves; when as yet St. AVGVSTINE will tell us, *Ipſe diabolus non eſt fornicator, neque ebrioſus*, the Divell himſelfe might thus commend himſelfe, for he was never drunke, nor ever committed Fornication; and the Publicane might make reply, LORD I thanke thee that I am no Phariſee, when as perhaps his whole life hath beene ſo farre from expreſſing the truth of godlineſſe, as that hee was never yet ſo well devoted to make ſhew of it.

Civit. dei, l. 14. c. 3.

Infælicißimum genus conſolationis eſt, de miſeriis hominum peccatorum capere ſolatia. It is a moſt unhappy kinde of comfort, for a man to ſolace himſelfe in his owne ſinne, upon the view of greater ſinnes in others; No, rather letting paſſe theſe deceivable diſcourſes, let us ſtrive to faſhion our ſelves according to the infallible rules of holy Scripture: and when wee know they are no common graces of the Spirit, whereby wee are ſeal'd unto the day of redemption; let us dayly implore *grace for grace*, that wee may *approve the things that are excellent*, *and bee filled with the fruits*

Salvian. ad Eccleſ. Cathol. lib. 2.

of righteouſneſſe. *Nativitas ſalutaris non accepta ſed cuſtodita vivificat*: It is not a ſingle grace, but grace upon grace muſt ſave us: and however the goodneſſe and mercy of God might bee content with leſſe, then our owne care and zeale will bee content for our owne ſelves; however our ſelves in humility might be content with the loweſt roome, even to bee doore-keepers in the houſe of God: yet how unſpeakable would bee our joy, if it might pleaſe him to grant more, then wee dare preſume to aſk, and according to our increaſe in grace for grace, multiply unto us glory for glory too, and

Cyprean Epiſt. 7.

entertaine us in his Kingdome, with an *Amice aſcende ſuperius, Friend ſit up higher*: As then IACOB returning into his owne Countrey, and afrayd of his brother ESAV, ſends before him preſent after preſent, firſt Goates, then Ewes, then Rammes, then Camels, and commands every Meſſenger to ſay; *Theſe are thy ſervant* IACOBS, *and it is a preſent ſent to my Lord* ESAV; that if the firſt preſent could do nothing, the ſecond, the third, or fourth, might move him; and thus where he feared moſt, hee findes moſt love, ESAV *imbraceth him, falles upon his neck and kiſſeth him*: ſo let it be all our care, being now onward on our way to *ſeeke a Countrey*, and how ſoone wee may meet with our Lord wee cannot tell, to ſend before us preſent after preſent, grace after grace, that when hee ſhall meet heere with our patience, there with our humilitie, here with our prayer, there with our repentance, heere with our faith, there with our charity; hee may embrace us in the armes of his mercy, and incourage our trembling ſoules with a *Confide fili, Be of a good comfort my Sonne, thy ſinnes are forgiven thee*. And thus much for the ſecond expoſition; I come now unto the laſt.

3 *Expoſition:*

Of his fulneſſe have wee all received, and grace for grace, that is grace to us anſwerable to the grace of CHRIST; not hee one grace wee another, but grace for grace, grace in ſome proportion of like nature, like condition with his. GOD *is faithfull*, ſaith St. PAUL, *by whom wee are called unto the fellowſhip of his Sonne, who when wee were dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes, hath by the ſame ſpirit quickened us together with* CHRIST, *hath raiſed us up together, made us ſit together in heavenly places.* And indeed it is a meditation full of comfort, that all thoſe graces and favors imparted to CHRIST

the

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the head, are communicable to us his members, *of his fleſh, and of his bones.* Was hee ſaluted with that gracious voyce from Heaven, *This is my beloved Sonne, in whom I am well pleaſed;* behold the ſame ſpirit, though ſecretly, yet powerfully cryes *Abba Father* in our ſoules, and aſſures us that wee alſo are the *Sonnes of God*, nay *heyres*, yea *coheyres* with his owne Son. For as CHRIST was incarnate and made the Sonne of God by aſſuming our nature to his perſon, ſo there is a kinde of incarnation in every Saint of God, by uniting his nature to our perſons. And indeed every pious Soule is another Virgin MARY, wherein wee reinwombe our SAVIOUR, and with whom wee travaile till hee be formed in us, til he who is conceived in us, is the Author of our new conception, and giveth ſpirituall life and motion to our ſoules. Had hee the wonderfull grace and power to worke great miracles, give eyes to the blinde, ſpeech to the dumbe, health to the ſicke, life to the dead? *Hee that beleeves in me,* ſaith he, *the workes that I doe, ſhall be doe alſo, nay even greater workes then theſe ſhall hee doe.* For if wee faile of the ſhadow, in the practiſe of thoſe great workes upon the body; yet we have the ſubſtance

Qui parturit verbum Chriſtum parturit. Amb in Luc. lib. 10. *cap.* 5.

ſubſtance of farre greater works upon the ſoule. And ſuch to this day, is the powerfull efficacie of this quickning grace, as that it openeth the blind eye, and the deafe eare, with joy to behold and heare the wonderfull workes of God; it looſeneth the dumb tõgue, and out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings, ordeineth ſtrength; it ſtretcheth forth the lame hand, with cheerfulneſſe to diſtribute to the neceſſities of others; it ſoftneth the hard heart, and kindleth it with zeale and forwardneſſe, *O Lord, my heart is ready, my heart is ready.* Nay though wee bee dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes, grace is able to recover

ver us. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and* CHRIST *ſhall give thee light.* Laſtly is CHRIST aſcended up to Heaven, *farre above all Principalities and Powers,* there for ever to ſit at the right hand of the Father, and will hee leave us comfortleſſe alone? No ſurely, as hee hath given us grace for grace, ſo will hee give us glory for glory too, and therefore *Bleſſed bee* GOD, ſayth St. PETER, *who hath begotten us againe, unto a lively hope, by the Reſurrection of* IESVS CHRIST, *from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, reſerved for us in the Heavens.*

Now hitherto, I perſwade my ſelfe we all gladly give eare to this diſcourſe, and are ready to ſecond it with the like Petition of the Diſciples, *Lord evermore give us of this grave.* But yet I feare that as DAVID, who went with joy to fetch the Arke out of the houſe of AMINADAB, on expectation thereby of a bleſſing to befall his owne houſe, when hee ſaw VZZAH ſmitten with ſodaine Death, for preſuming to touch the Arke, was preſently diſpleaſed, and afraid too, for *how ſhall the Arke of the Lord,* ſaith he, *come to me?* and therefore he ſent it to the houſe of OBED EDOM. So I feare many there are well pleaſed with the grace of CHRIST, as long as wee diſcourſe of the joy, the comfort, the glory that attends it: but let us once mention the ſorrow and affliction which for grace and righteouſneſſe ſake we muſt endure: let us tell them that he that will bee CHRISTS Diſciple; muſt firſt in humility *deny himſelfe*, and with patience *take up his croſſe and follow him*; this is a hard ſaying, ſay they, and who is able to endure it? If theſe bee the difficulties which attend the Ark, let it goe to the houſe of OBED EDOM, we will not bring it to our City. But before you ſend

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ſend it away, let mee aske you but one queſtion, *ſhall wee receive good at the hands of the Lord, and ſhall wee no receive evill*: nay more, *Is it not enough that the Diſciple bee as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord?* Would wee receive grace, and will we not have grace for grace? would wee have the grace of his exaltation, and will wee no have the grace of his humilitie? CHRIST himſelfe wee know *firſt ſuffered*, before hee *entred into glory*; and wee muſt firſt bee made *conformable unto his death*, before wee can *attaine the reſurrection of the dead.*

But bleſt men are we, in

that this conformitie now in a great part conſiſts onely in a preparation, and reſolution to endure; when as the peace and happineſſe which wee enjoy have remov'd the miſery of thoſe evill dayes farre off from us, which thouſands and millions of the Saints of God have been inforced to endure. Indeed *we live by faith*, ſaith St. PAVL, the beſt part of our life by Faith, *and not by ſight*, yet what eye ſo dull, that ſees not the happineſſe of this preſent life of ours, or what tongue ſo tyed, whoſe heart will not force it to breake out into termes of gratulation; *Praiſe the* LORD *O* *my Soule, and all that is within me praiſe his holy name.*

Let us looke into the primitive times, or wee need not goe ſo farre, but on the dayes of our Fore-fathers, and how terrible then were the conditions of ſalvation? What ſtrength of grace, what a compleat armour was then requiſite, to defend them againſt all the fiery darts of Sathan? *Cœleſtis regiæ januam gradibus pœnarum aſcendentes, ſcalas ſibi quodammodò de eculeis cataſtiſq; fecerunt.* The wrack, the ſcourge, the ſtake, and what ever torture the witty cruelty of man was able to invent, theſe were the ſteps whereby they painfully aſcended

Salvian. de Gubernat. Dei, lib. 3.

up to Heaven: But ſurely, if ever unto any, our *yoake is eaſie, and our burthen light*, in a peaceable age we reape the fruits of peace; with the freedome of our conſcience, we enjoy the freedome of the world too; in all the faire pleaſures and delights whereof, what ever liberty a diſcreet Heathen would deſire, a good Chriſtian may enjoy; and after all this, with a *Non obſtante* to St. HIEROME, *de deliciis in delicias*, out of the boſome of the World we may gently remove our head into ABRAHAMS boſome, quietly breath our laſt, and into the hands of our Redeemer commend our Spirit.

Difficile imo impoſſibile eſt, ut quis tranſeat de deliciis in delicias. ad Iulianū Epiſt. 34.

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Epiſt. 9.

Then indeed (to invert a little the words of St. CYPRIAN) *facta eſt Eccleſia in cruore Martyrum purpurea*, the Church was of a ſcarlet dye in the blood of the Martyrs: *nunc in operibus fratrum candida*, now ſhe hath or may have, her garments white in the faire and peaceable converſation of the Saints. *Sic floribus ejus nec lilia, nec roſæ deſunt*; thus hath ſhe been adorn'd and beautified with flowers of divers colours, then with the red Roſe, now the white.

Yet true indeed it is, that even to this day, *many are the troubles of the Righteous*, but troubles common alſo with the ſinner, wherin the graces of CHRISTS patiēce and humility are ſo far frō dejecting us, as that they are the chiefe comforters we have. There is a trouble of poverty, wherein grace cheerfully ſuſtaines us; teacheth us as well how to *want*, as how to *abound*; and if after a faire endeavour wee cannot raiſe our meanes unto our minde, preſently humbles our minde unto our meanes. There is a trouble of ſickneſſe, but yet in all our ſickneſſe grace *makes all our bed. The Lord giveth* (giveth health and wealth) and *the Lord taketh away: and bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* Laſtly, there is a trouble of ſinne too, which if grace ſhall ſometime increaſe, by laying the greatneſſe and danger thereof neare unto our heart; yet it will eaſily perſwade us that it is good for us to bee thus troubled.

For indeed ſuch is the ſtrange and powerfull efficacie thereof, as that, *vulnus opemq;*, it both woundeth and cureth; with a quick and ſharpe ſenſe of our ſins it oft times draweth teares from our eyes, and preſently out of a joy that it hath made us become thus ſenſible, it wipeth them off againe. As then trouble is the inſeparable companion of our life, what more neceſſary then that grace ſhould bee the inſeparable companion of our trouble: that if trouble ſhould ſometime overcharge us, and force us to cry out, *Wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver mee?* Grace may preſently ſuccenturiate and releeve us, with a *Thanks bee to God through* IESVS CHRIST *our Lord*; on which firme Rocke as long as we truly faſten the Anchor of our hope, nor hight nor depth, nor life nor death, ſhall ever be able to remove us.

Againe, are we all to receive grace for grace, grace paralell and proportionable to the grace of CHRIST, as indeed among other cauſes, therfore was CHRIST incarnate that hee might give unto us a patterne of true grace, that in all things we may learne to be *holy, as he is holy*; ſurely then from hence wee may beſt put in practice that caveat of St. Iohn, and learne how to *try the Spirits*. By the grace of God (it is the common language of us all) we hope we ſhall doe well, but how ſhall we know whether the grace we ſpeake off, bee a grace in word onely, or in deed? And I hope there is no man here ſo inſenſible of ſuch things as belong unto his peace, but ſometime in ſecret will commune with his owne heart, and make inquirie, *Lord are there but few that ſhall bee* *ſaved*, and thoſe few ſuch onely as have received the marke of thy ſpirit, how then ſhall I know whether I am partaker of this ſpirit, that I may have, if not an aſſurance, yet a faire hope that I ſhall bee of the number of theſe few? A queſtion, as very neceſſary to be made, ſo truly very difficult to bee reſolv'd. For mine owne part, I am perſwaded there is no readier way to give our ſelves ſatisfaction in this doubt, then to propoſe the doubt even in the very termes of my Text, *Have I grace for grace*, the grace of our Lord Iesvs Christ, ſome commendable meaſure of his charity, his zeale, his meekenes, his temperance, his juſtice, his mercy? Have I true patience and humility, true ſorrow and anguiſh of ſoule for mine owne ſinnes, anſwerable to that ſorrow of his above all ſorrowes for the ſins of the whole World? Alas otherwiſe, if we bee full of ſpleene and malice, if our mouth bee an open ſepulchre, therein ready to bury the good name and honor of every man whoſe wayes and actions doe but a little thwart us; (though yet *Michael* the Archangel in a farre juſter conteſtation, then can be betweene man and man, would not revile the Divell,) we know that CHRIST prayed for his enemies, and dyed for his enemies, and how then dwels the love of CHRIST in us? If upon every ſlight provocation we ſhall breake out into foule curſes, the pox, the plague, the divell, evils that we need not imprecate; happy are we if with all our prayers we can deprecate them; and theſe curſes ſhall ſecond with fearfull oaths, and at each word be prodigall of the life, the wounds, the death, the bloud, that precious blood of *Chriſt*, one drop whereof perhaps the time may come when we ſhall call and cry for, and not bee ſo happy as to obteine it; we know that CHRIST when hee was reviled, reviled not againe, and in all our familiar diſcourſe hath confin'd us to a *yea, yea*, and a *nay, nay*; and how then dwells the meekneſſe, nay even but the language of CHRIST in us? If wee ſay unto our Soule, *Take thy eaſe, eate, drinke and bee merry*; and ſhall vilifie all others, who will not follow the ſame exceſſe of ryot with our ſelves: wee know that it was the ſtrict charge of CHRIST, that wee ſhould not overcharge our ſelves with ſurfetting and drunkenneſſe, the baſtard parents of chambering and wantonneſſe, and how then dwelleth the temperance of CHRIST in us? If wee be alwayes querulous and diſcontent, upō every light croſſe ready to blaſpheme the ſufferings of CHRIST, (with a *non eſt dolor ſicut dolor meus*) *was there ever ſorrow like unto my ſorrow?* wee know that CHRIST, though made a man of ſorrowes, and this ſorrow for the ſinne of man, yet *like the Sheepe before the Shearer hee opened not his mouth*, and how then dwels the patience of CHRIST in us? Laſtly, if wee put off the chiefe care of our Soule till the laſt houre, our prayer, our repentance, and ſtrict examination of our wayes, and thinke in the meane while that a *Lord, Lord*, a formall devotion will ſuf-

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fice; we know that CHRIST ſpent whole nights in prayer, and in the anguiſh of his ſoule, and that for the ſenſe of our ſinnes, ſweat even drops of blood, and how then dwelleth the devotion of CHRIST in us? Thoſe are quaries able to ſtartle a good ſoule; and ſurely would we let paſſe thoſe deceivable examples, which from the frailties of men too indulgently ofttimes we propoſe unto our ſelves, this man will doe thus, and that man thus; and ſtrive more nearly to ſquare our actions according to this infallible patterne in my Text: a world of ſinnes there are wherewith the World through cuſtome is now almoſt uncontroullably full fraught, which we ſhould then be as farre from any deſire to commit, as now I feare we are from any intent to amend, and having receiv'd at firſt, though but a ſparke of grace, wee ſhould in time ſo kindle and inflame it, as that like IOHN Baptiſt, it might prove a *burning and a ſhining light*, by which light we might then eaſily diſcover our owne happineſſe, and ſay with IOB, *Now I know that my Redeemer liveth.*

But ſome men perhaps will heere reply, as the Patient once did to the Phyſitian, preſcribing him to keepe a good dyet; if I had meant, (ſaith hee) t keepe a good dyet, I ſhoul never have need to come t you for Phyſicke, pray tel me how I may keepe an il dyet and not bee ſicke: fo you will ſay perhaps, we al know already what goo wee muſt doe, and wha grace we muſt have that w may be ſaved, but pray tel us what evils we may doe, and what grace wee ma want, and yet bee ſaved May we not ſweare a little, ryot a little, and if our beloved ſinne bee but a littl one, may not our ſoule fly thither and yet live? Bu firſt I pray tell mee, wha ſinne is there which an man dareth cal little, which without repentãce is great, heavie, and enough to weigh him down to Hell? Indeed ſo great is the mercy of God, as that we finde a pardon oft times given to great ſinnes; but where ever doe wee finde beforehand a diſpenſation given to the leaſt? God ſometime upon the fore-ſight of our repentance, antedates his pardon; *Thy ſinne is forgiven thee*, ſaith *Nathan* unto DAVID; though it is thought the ſolemne repentance for this ſinne was afterwards perform'd: but ſhall we therefore upon the fore-intendment of our repentance antedate our ſin? Surely, *if you would give me a houſe full of gold* I dare not tell you ſo. For this quære is as if a man ſhould aske, how high may I fall downe headlong, before I breake my necke? or how often may I ſtabbe my ſelf, before I be wounded unto death? Surely becauſe a little wound oftimes proveth dangerous; or at leaſtwiſe full of paine, a wiſe man will not raſhly cut his skin; and if *skin for skin, and all that a man hath hee will give for his life*, how diligent and tender ought to bee every mans care for his owne ſoule? *Quæ inſania eſt, ut non quanta potes omnino facias, cum ignores penitus quid tibi competat ad ſalutem?* What madneſſe is it for a man

Salvian. ad Eccleſ. Cathol. lib. 2.

not to take the beſt care he can for his ſoule, when as he knowes that after all the care which he can take, even the *Righteous ſhall ſcarce bee ſaved*? Let us not then preſume to inquire, how farre we may ſuffer ſin to abound? Be we never ſo carefull to ſuppreſſe it, ſinne will abound too farre: but aske rather, how farre muſt grace more abound, to obteyne the forgiveneſſe of our ſinne? and when we ſee what high patternes of obedience are every where in holy Scripture propos'd unto our imitation, the perfection of the Father, the grace of the Sonne, the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, the Communion of Saint and Angels, may theſe grea examples dayly inlarge our indeavours, and as long as wee can never hope t doe what wee ought, le us never ceaſe to doe wha we may.

Now then to draw all t a concluſion; We reade i this Chapter of a twofol fulneſſe in CHRIST; ther is a fulneſſe of truth, and fulneſſe of grace: fulneſ of truth wee have reveal'd in holy Scripture, and from hence *truth for truth* wee are able to communicate each to others: but fulneſſe of grace this is Gods prarogative, which he reſerves onely to himſelfe; and *grace for grace* what man-ever durſt take upon him to beſtow? Fulneſſe of truth it is the religion of the ſoule, & furniſheth the eye, the eare, the tongue, the head: but fulneſſe of grace, this is the ſoule of our religion, and drawes all unto the heart: fulneſſe of truth it is a diligent MARTHA, and provideth many commendable things, but fulneſſe of grace this is the devout MARY, and bringeth the maine neceſſary part: this is the pearle, which though wee ſhould ſell all that we have to buy, will buy a thouſand times more then wee can ſell: this is the oyle which cheereth the countenance, the wine which makes glad the heart of man, and with a good conſcience keepeth a continuall feaſt. This is *comes in via pro vehiculo*, the moſt gentile and faithfull companion in the world, which whē wealth, when honor, whē ſtrength, when wit, when ſpeech, when ſenſe, when life it ſelſe ſhall faile, will yet never leave us nor forſake us. I beſeech you then as wee cannot but all thankfully acknowledge, that we have already receiv'd the religion of the ſoule, *truth for truth*; let us dayly implore from Heaven the ſoule of our Religion, *grace for grace*; grace upon grace, even *the grace of our Lord* IESVS CHRIST, that having given us an underſtanding head, hee would bee pleas'd to *create in us a new heart, and renew a right ſpirit within us*: that when with the ſighes and groanes of this ſpirit, from the bottome of this heart, we ſhall call and cry unto him *Abba Father*, hee may graciouſly make anſwer from Heaven, *I will be unto thee a Father, and thou ſhalt bee to me a Sonne.*

Amen.

THE

THE FOVRTH SERMON.

ECCLES. 12. 1.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth.

WHen I read the ſaying of St. IOHN, *My little Children this is the laſt time*, the time, ſaith St. PAVL, even of the *end of the world*, & conſider withal, that it is now neare 1600 yeares ago, ſince this caveat was firſt given; ſurely, me thinks, wee that live at the end of this end; at the la period of this laſt time, have now great cauſe, together with the end of th world, eve daily to bethin our ſelves of our own end and not onely for feare o our day of death, but ou of ſome reſpect alſo eve unto the day of judgment with the wiſe Virgins to begin betimes to prepare oyl ready for our lamps, ſeri ouſly oft times to catechiſ our ſoules wth the like queſtion of the Pſalmiſt, *Wherewithall ſhal a yong man clenſe his wayes*; and make anſwe with my Text, *Remembe now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth.*

In the handling of which words three things I ſhall breefly commend unto you. Firſt, I will propoſe ſome reaſons and motives to perſwade the young man to be thus mindfull of his Creator: *Secondly,* I will remove thoſe excuſes, which all youth for the moſt part are ready to pretend for the neglect of this duty. Laſtly, I will cloſe up all with ſome ſhort and uſefull remembrances, wch may ſerve to imprint and faſten this ſo neceſſary duty into the meditation and practiſe of our Soules. In the handling whereof, though I have here a young man onely to remember, yet you ſhall ſee no age ſhall be forgotten: to be-gin then with the firſt.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, and even for this cauſe i the dayes of thy youth, b cauſe thou knoweſt no whether ever thou ſhal live till thou art old. Fo the life of man it is as *Shadow*, and our dayes ar now but a *ſpanne long*, nay even this ſhort meaſure, as by ſad experienc wee have too frequent triall, wee ſee ſo much contracted, as that wee injoy oft-times but som few inches even of this Spanne neither. *Few an evill are the dayes of our Pilgrimage heer e on earth*, have wee now more reaſon to complaine then IACOB had. Now becauſe our dayes are *evill*, wee had need to remember our Creator to amend them: becauſe *few*, we were beſt doe it quickly; leſt we forgetting him, he may prove too mindfull of us, and in his juſtice cut off thoſe *few* dayes of ours, wherein wee have beene ſo *evill*, as not to flie unto his Mercy. And hence is it I ſhould think that St. IOHN in his firſt Epiſtle doth ſo often ſtile the Saints of GOD by the name of *little Children*: *My little Children theſe things I write unto you; Little children keepe* *your ſelves from Idols; littl children it is the laſt time;* not onely to expreſſe his fatherly and tender affection over them, with whom like PAVL, hee did even *goe in travaile, till* CHRIS *ſhould bee formed in them;* not onely to teach them gentleneſſe and humility, and that hee that will ente into the Kingdome of Heaven, muſt firſt ſtoop to the confeſſion of the *Pſalmiſt, LORD I am not high minded, but even as a Child weaned from his Mothers breaſt, ſo doe I behave my ſelfe;* but even in this reſpect alſo to let us underſtand, by reaſon of the ſhortneſſ and uncertainty of the lif of man, that even from ou

Childhood wee are to be trayn'd up, with the childe SAMUEL, to *miniſter unto the Lord girt with a linnen Ephod*, while our garments are yet *white* and ſpotleſſe, that both Body and Soule too may as it were hand in hand grow up from ſtrength to ſtrength, till of Children wee become *perfect Men*, and atteyne *unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſſe of* CHRIST. For *wee are all by Nature the children of wrath*, all lyable to thoſe everlaſting chaynes prepared for the Divell and his Angels, and as long as this ſtate continueth, wee may complaine with REBECCA, *I am weary of my life*,

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and wee may ſit downe with IOB, and curſe th *day that wee were borne in*. and can we then think any time too ſoone to begin t make an *agreement with ou adverſary by the way*, by ou Prayer, our repentance, ou faith in the waſhing of th Bloud of IESVS, get th hand-writing of the La cancell'd and waſht off, tha as with PAVL and SILA in the Priſon, our fetter may fall away, and of th children of wrath we ma be redeem'd into the glorious liberty of the ſonnes o GOD. For was it not madneſſe in PHARAOH, when as the Frogges were now ſwarming in the Land, in his Court, in his Bedchamber,

ber, in his boſome, and MOSES came kindly to him and *when*, (ſayth hee) *ſhall I intreat for thee to deſtroy theſe Frogs*, was it not madneſſe (I ſay) to put him off and bid him come *To morrow?* Surely wee would thinke even but that one nights torture hee would have redeem'd rather, though with the one halfe of his Kingdome: and are not our Sinnes as noyſome companions as thoſe unwelcome gueſts of his? When then our conſcience like *Moſes* ſhall ſay unto our Soules, when ſhall I intreat the Lord to deſtroy theſe ſinnes, ſhould wee not be more mad then *Pharaoh*, did we reply, *To morrow*: no, *To day if you will heare his voyce harden not your hearts.* For the life of man as it is ſweet, ſo it is ſhort too, and though but one onely way wee have into the world, yet many out. Whether this or that ſhall be our end, whether ſooner or later it ſhall come, this is a ſecret which GOD hath purpoſely reſerv'd unto himſelf; that ſo wee may ever be prepared for that, from which we can never be ſecure.

Let us not then put off neceſſary duties to uncertaine times; let us not turne Prodigals in our youth, in hope of I know not how many yeares are yet to come to cry *Peccavi* in our age. For what know wee but that even in the midſt of our jollitie, when we ſhall ſay unto our ſoule *Take thy eaſe and be merry*; what know wee but that even then we may be arreſted with a *Thou foole this night ſhall thy Soule be taken from thee*, and then *as the Tree falls ſo it muſt lye*? *Quid enim ſeculi poteſt eſſe diuturnum, cum ipſa ſecula non ſint diuturna?* For why ſhould wee preſume of our life; or any thing elſe to continue long in this world, when as the world it ſelf hath not long to continue?

Ambroſ. in Luc. lib. 4. cap. 5.

Secondly, *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth*; becauſe though thou wert ſure to live, and wert reſolv'd to ſinne when thou art young; yet thou art not ſure to repent when thou art old, and therefore why ſhouldſt thou venture on a certaine diſeaſe upon ſo uncertaine a remedy. For the Grace of God it is like the Poole of *Betheſda*, and cureth but at ſet times, and therefore with the Cripples in the Goſpell wee muſt waite all opportunities, and call upon the name of the Lord, not when our ſelves at leyſure ſhall bee pleas'd to ſeeke after him, but when hee in his mercy will vouchſafe to be found of us. Indeed ſome Examples wee finde in holy Scripture of men, who

Ambroſ. in Luc. lib. 4. cap. 5.

who have made but a ſhort paſſage unto Heaven, and having not ſet forward toward GRACE, Till they came unto full yeares, have yet liv'd to overtake him, before they came unto the grave. The Thiefe, we reade it in the Goſpell, in one and the ſame day commeth a malefactor to the Croſſe, and goeth a Saint to Paradiſe: but pray tell mee, for this one, this ſingle one, who had ſo good ſucceſſe, how many thouſands doe you thinke have gone from the Croſſe to Hell? Were it not madneſſe in us then to venture on that diſeaſe, whereof thouſands have been caſt away upon this cold Preſumptiō

that

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that ſome odde man or two have been recovered? We are all too prone to looke on the Thiefe that hung on the right hand, but wee might doe well ſometime to think upon him who hung upon the left. For is there great Mercy with God, and is there not great Iuſtice too? Doe but looke into the ſame Booke, and you ſhall ſee that the ſame hand hath purpoſely regiſtred many fearefull Examples in all kinds, of men ſodainly ſurpriſed by his juſtice, even preſently upon the committing of their ſinne, that ſo the memory of theyr ends may fright us from the imitation of theyr actions, as knowing

that

hat what hath befallen one, may be common unto ll, and that in ſuch ſinnes wherein ſome men have yed ſo deſperately, no nan can live ſecure. And urely as Sinnes doe propoſe themſelves to us, would we but ſeriouſly oppoſe theſe Examples unto hem, and as our SAVIOUR hath already made the application to our hand, *Remember* LOTS *wife*, when having put the hand unto the plough, wee are ready to looke backe againe: Remember ACHAN in our Covetouſneſſe, ABSOLON in our Diſobedience, ZIMRY and COSBI in our Luſt, HEROD in our Pride, ANANIAS in our Hypocriſie and

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and the like; ſurely I ſay, would we but ſeriouſly lay theſe precedents to heart, the feare of the puniſhment would ſoon fright us from the love of the ſinne. Let us not then preſuming on Gods patience provoke his anger; Let us not fondly perſwade our ſelves because no time is too late for him to forgive, that therefore any time is ſoone enough for us to repent: no, if wee will be ſure to ſing a *requiem* at our going out of the world, let us begin our *miſerere* at our coming in. *Infirma ſpes quæ committitur tempori, cum omn tempus incertum ſit, nec omnis ſpes tempori ſuperſtes*; for weak is our preſent truſt on time

Ambroſ. de Pænit. lib. 2. cap. 9.

time to come, when as we know that all time to come is uncertaine. Nor can we certainly truſt all time that commeth, becauſe that goodnes of God wch hath promiſed pardon wherever we ſhall repent, hath no where promiſed repentance when ever our ſelves pleaſe.

Laſtly, Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, becauſe in the dayes of thy youth thy Creator hath remembred thee: who is it from whom thou haſt receiv'd thy being? Are not *children, & the fruit of the womb a guift that commeth of the Lord?* who is it by whom thou liveſt, and moveſt, and enjoyeſt the bleſſings of this life? doe not *the eyes of all thing waite upon thee O Lord, and thou filleſt every living thing with Plenteouſneſſe* ? Who is it that amidſt al the caſualties of the worl preſerveth thee in thy going out and in thy comming in ? Hath not he given *his Angels charge ove thee, that thou ſhalt not ſ much as daſh thy foot againſ a ſtone* ? So that fro thy firſt conception to thi houre, one day telling another what great things h that is mighty hath don for thee; what canſt tho doe leſſe in teſtimonie o thy thankfulneſſe then t ſerve him without feare i holineſſe and righteouſneſſe all the dayes of thy life? GODS remembrance of thee, it is voluntary, but thine of him is of neceſſity. Hee can ſay of the beſt of men, I have no need of you, but can the beſt man ſay to him, I have no need of thee? If then his goodneſſe freely moove him to be mindfull of thee, let thy duty conſtraine thee to remember him. And that not without juſt cauſe; for unleſſe thou ſhalt put him in mind to perfect the worke of his owne hands, and to his creation of Nature adde the creation of Grace alſo, a thouſand times better had it beene that thou hadſt been quite forgotten, and not Created at all. For however of all

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the Creatures of the earth man be the moſt noble and divine; yet ſimply to be a man is but a doubtfull bleſſing, thou knoweſt not yet whether thou ſhalt be lov'd or hated. That which puts all out of doubt muſt be a new creation; and therefore if thou deſire to take up the language of the Phariſee but with a better minde, *Lord I thanke thee that I am not as other men are*, now no more an olde but a new creature; remember thy Creator with the prayer of the Pſalmiſt, *Create in me O Lord a cleane heart, and renew a right ſpirit within me*, a ſpirit whereby our hearts may be enlarged with obedience and thankfulneſſe, and dayly remembrance of our duties unto him, according to the largeneſſe of his goodneſſe and mercy, and continuall mindfulneſſe of us, and then *Quàm beati eſſemus, ſi quàm promptam erga nos Dei audientiam legimus, tam prompto ipſum audire velimus*, O how happy ſhould wee be, were we but halfe ſo ready to heare and fulfill the commands of GOD, as we are to overheare and challenge his promiſes. And thus much for the reaſons and motives to perſwade the young man to remember his Creator? I come now in the ſecond place to anſwer his objections.

Salvian. de Gubernat. Dei lib. 2.

Firſt then it may bee urg'd, muſt the young man ſo early begin to remember his Creator? Muſt the tender neck preſently become ſubject to this heavie yoake, no ſooner have we with-drawne our hand from the *ferula*, and come newly but to feele and know our ſelves, but preſently muſt wee be bound in a perpetuall apprentiſhip, and that to a harder Maſter then before? This is a hard ſaying, and who is able to endure it, willingly would wee take up our croſſe and follow CHRIST, but gladly would wee have a little reſpite firſt, to go and bid the world farewell.

Indeed were Religion an eaſie profeſſion, it might more eaſily bee deferr'd: Things wherein there is leſſe difficulty, require leſſe induſtry: But becauſe all the World will grant that it is very hard to bee good, ſurely wee had need to begin betimes. Difficultie then you ſee which is urg'd as an objection to put off Religion till olde age, proves a ſtrong argument to perſwade us to be religious in our youth: yet notwithſtanding could it but well appeare, that the ſame yoake, which puniſheth us in our youth, would prove more eaſie to old age the excuſe might bee more pardonable: But for my part when I conſider that all Trades, all Arts, all Sciences, are in their firſt rudiments, beſt learnt in our minority; I cannot be perſwaded but that religion alſo, (which with pretence of difficulty, becauſe wee are unwilling to make triall of our owne ſtrength, wee are all too ready to put off till wee are old) will yet prove moſt facile in our youth: And hee that ſhall compare the ſeverall advantages which age and youth have each of other in matters of Religion, will finde perhaps that it is no paradox to maintain againſt the great Philoſopher, that *Iuuenis eſt magis idoneus auditor moralis and divina Philoſophia* *ſophie too*, that a young *Timothy* is a fitter Auditor of a lecture of Divinity, than an old *Nicodemus*.

Age I confeſſe, to give it its due honour, hath many prerogatives of youth. Age is coole and temperate; thoſe hot purſuites of vain delights if grace reſtraine not, wee ſee in time nature itſelfe forbeares. Age it is ſtayed and reſolute; good courſes well begun it will hold on: though the hand bee hardly drawne unto the plough, yet the eye will not ſuddainely looke backe againe. Age it is wiſe and experienc't, and having made frequent triall of the fickle unconſtancie of all things under the Sunne, can now truely ſay of laughter, *Thou art madneſſe*, and that all the glory of the world, it is *but vanity and vexation of ſpirit*. Laſtly, Age it is ſickly and craz'd, and daily draweth onward nearer to the grave; & we ſee the tongue no not of men and Angels to be ſo powerfull an Orator to proclaime unto us, *Duſt thou art*, *and to duſt thou muſt returne*, as but one dumbe fit of a diſeaſe. ALEXANDER whom in his health all the World could not perſwade but that a GOD hee would needs be, upon a wound receiv'd ſeeing the blood come, could then humble his conceit, *& jam ſentio me mortalem*, and now I ſee, ſaith he, that I muſt dye: ſo that the old man dayly ſeeing that death, which may be neare unto the young man, cannot be far off from him, is the more eaſily perſwaded to prepare himſelfe for the more eaſie paſſage when it comes. Theſe indeed are great advantages of age, and yet perhaps the young man hath farre greater.

For firſt, Youth it is baſhfull and modeſt: and modeſty, (ſaith the Philoſopher) if it be not a vertue, it is vertues companion. And thus much Chriſtianitie alſo ſeemes to acknowledge, when wee ſay of a man that is not yet paſt ſhame, that ſurely he is not yet paſt Grace. For ſhame oft-times it is the Guardian of Grace, and many ſins there are for the forbearãce whereof even the beſt Soules are ſometime as much beholding to their modeſty, as to their Religion. But age you know it is more bold and daring, and therefore oft-times for want of vertues companion, vertue her ſelfe proves wanting, and the loſſe of ſhame becomes the ruine of Grace: Againe, Youth it is alwayes ſubject to controll, hath a Father, a Mother, a Tutor, a Maſter, or if all theſe may fayle, yet old age it ſelfe, wee ſee, if for no other cauſe, yet becauſe old, it challengeth a kind of Fatherhood over all youth, and if but old Elies gentle reproofe, *Nay my Sonnes why doe you ſuch things*, it leaves ſome impreſſion in the Soule. But age 'tis uncontrolable, *Rebuke not an Elder*, it is the precept in the Text, and Elihu in Iob converſing with his Ancients, though they gave him juſt cauſe of ſpeech and reproofe too, yet you ſee how long hee layes his hand upon his mouth before ever hee durſt ſpeake: ſo that wee ſee oft-times the greater is the old mans libertie, the greater alſo is his licence. Againe, youth it is more free and generous; in all dealings of the world liveth neareſt to the beſt law of nature, *Do as thou wouldſt be done unto*, not ſo ready to defraud, and yet more readie to reſtore. But Age, it is penurious and griping, and now come in thoſe cruell times of extortion and oppreſſion, *Quocumque modo rem*, a man will *tranſgreſſe even for a peece of bread.* Laſtly, and that which is the maine advantage, youth it is like golde, ſoft and pliable, if ſoone bent, ſoone ſet to rights againe; but age, it is like Iron, ſullen and ſtiffe: Youth indeed it is more heady, but tendermouth'd; but age it is more headſtrong, if it flie out, it will run its courſe;

the old mans Motto is like that of PILATE, *Quod ſcripſi ſcripſi*, Hee will have his will. Sinnes of youth they are but ill diſpoſitions; but ſinnes of age they are commonly ill habits. Here the fleſh turneth Traitor, and rebelleth againſt the Spirit, but there it turneth Tyrant and commandeth. In the dayes of our youth, GOD patiently ſtandeth at the doore of our hearts and knocketh; and when hee hath ſpoke once and twice, though wee regard not, hee will not yet preſently leave us nor forſake us: but when once thirty or forty yeares long he hath beene grieved with a rebellious and gaine-ſaying generation, in the end his patience turneth to anger, *What could I have done which I have not done* ? and ſo gives them over to a reprobate ſence.

Thus then you ſee the young man alſo hath his advantages, and indeed whatever precedence our age can chalenge of our youth, it is then onely to be found when the old man ploughes with the young mans heckfer: For then it is no wonder, that the incomes of our age multiplying upon the ſtocke of our youth ſhould make the fairer revenew: but ſet the compariſon right, and then thus much I dare boldlie ſay, that whereas in theſe dayes of ours, whereof out of zeale I preſume to make them better, wee wrongfully complaine oft-times as if they never had beene worſe; many rare and vertuous young men are not perhaps ſo rare to bee found: yet I thinke it is almoſt a miracle to ſee a very good old man, who never began to bee good till hee was old. If then vertue be ſo hard a taske, as to excuſe our vices wee are all too eaſilie perſwaded to beleeve; ſurely in all diſcretion wee are to make choyce of the fitteſt ſeaſon to attaine it, and that I have ſhewen you are the daies of our Youth.

Confeſſ. lib 8. cap. 5.

For let ſinne have but its courſe a while, and if you will not beleeve me, Saint AVGUSTINE ſhall tell you what will be the iſſue. *Ex voluntate perverſa facta eſt libido, & dum ſervitur libidini, facta eſt conſuetudo, & dum conſuetudini non reſiſtitur, facta eſt neceſſitas.* From a perverſe will, which naturally wee all bring into the World, ariſe ſinfull deſires, and while we humor our deſire, cuſtome layes hold upon us, and while this cuſtome is not controld it proves another nature. Heere then you ſee the difficulties of Sinne: they are like the waters mentioned by the Prophet, begin at the ankles, riſe to the knees, thence to the waſte, after to the neck, till in the end they overwhelme us. Were it not better then at the firſt to venture over ſhooes, then at the laſt over head and eares? and therefore while the waters are yet low and paſſable, before the overflowings of ungodlineſſe ſhall too much fright our ſoules, let mee commend unto you that Item of our SAVIOUR but upon a better errand, *Quod facis fac cito?* That which thou meaneſt to doe, doe quickly. And thus much for the firſt objection, I come now to anſwer a ſecond.

For Religion you will ſay, and the early remembrance of thoſe duties which we owe to our Creator they breed melancholie, and fright the Soule with many ſad and deſperate thoughts: not an idle word can be ſpoken, not a *Racha* given or *Thou foole*, not the leaſt riot or exceſſe committed, but preſently the conſcience checks us with judgment and Hell fire; and gladly would we deſire the freedom to live a little chearly in our youth.

Thus have I ſeene a patient ſometime complaine of his Phyſick, when as indeed he was heart ſicke of his diſeaſe. For pray, tell me what is it, wch in thoſe ſad fits, whereto the Soules of good men are oft-times ſubject, (and perhaps did we more often feele them the more happy might we be;) what is it I ſay, which breeds this melancholy, is it our Religion? that wee know is the Phyſicke of the Soule: no ſurely, it is our ſin, and that is the diſeaſe. Were it not madneſſe in us then, to deſire to live freely in our ſinne, that we might live free from ſorrow, when as indeed there is nothing truly to be ſorrowed for but ſinne? For let us reckon up a catalogue of all ſuch delights, as our owne Soule would wiſh to concurre to make a cheerefull life, and you ſhall ſee religion hath the promiſe of them all. *Wouldſt thou injoy long life, and ſee good dayes? Keepe thy tongue from vill, and thy lippes that they ſpeake no guile.* And this life of thine wouldſt thou have as healthfull as 'tis long? *Praiſe the Lord O my Soule, for he it is that reneweth thy ſtrength, and maketh thee young and luſty as an Eagle.* And this health of thine wouldſt thou have maintained with plenty, *Truſt in the Lord and doe good, and verily thou ſhalt be fed, Delight in the Lord and hee ſhall give thee thy hearts deſire.* And this plenty of thine, wouldſt thou have ſeconded with joy? *O be joyfull in the Lord all yee*

Lands; ſerve the Lord with gladneſſe, and come before his preſence with a ſong. And laſtly, of this joy of thine, wouldſt thou have a patent, not for thy ſelfe onely but for thy poſterity? *The Righteous ſhall dwell at eaſe, and his ſeed ſhall inherite the Land.* If then life and health, plenty and joy, can make a cheerefull man, certainly religion cannot make him melancholly. But yet I muſt confeſſe theſe rare effects, they are perhaps but rarely to bee found, and ſhort life, craz'd health, ſmall plenty, unconſtant joyes they are the portion oft-times even of GODS deareſt Saints; not that GOD hath forgotten to be bee ſo good as his word promiſeth, but that men have not remembred to be ſo good as his word commandeth, but have neglected the performance of thoſe ſtrict conditions, whereupon the accompliſhment of theſe ſo large promiſes depend. But however do the righteous, and ſuch as daylie remember their Creator, doe they onely eate ſowre Grapes, and are the ſinners ſuch as have not God in all theyr thoughts, are their teeth never ſet on edge? It is true indeed, that *GOD receives no man but whom hee doth chaſtice*, chaſtice not with croſſe and affliction onely, but with ſorrow and an-

anguiſh of Soule, with feare and trembling for his ſin; yet here wee have a mixture of little judgement with great mercy, the ioy of our receiving ſoone eaſing the ſmart of our chaſticement. But is it not true withall, that the ſinner hee ſhall receive his chaſticement and yet never bee received; here is judgement without mercy. With the righteous heavineſſe may endure for a night, but ioy commeth in the morning: but with the ſinner this order is inverted; ioy indeed may endure for a night, but ſorrow returnes in the Morning. When upon the ſober view of his of his intemperate luxuriances finding his Soule like Cains, guilty of more ſinne then he knoweth how to have forgiven, hee becomes ſubject to the feareful expectation of more puniſhment, then hee knowes which way to endure.

Indeed if we looke upon the ſurface of things onely, the ſinner may ſeeme to be the onely chearly man, ſits downe merrily to eate and drinke, riſeth to his play, and wondereth that any man ſhould refuſe to follow the ſame exceſſe of riot with himſelfe. But let us now a little change his cõmons, and remove him from his owne table, which from the exceſſe and riot thereof I feare we may too juſtly ofttimes ſtile the Table of Devils, and bring him to the Table of the Lord, and then behold with how heavie a heart doth he reach forth his trembling hand to pertake of thoſe ſacred myſteries, as juſtly fearing upon this Conſcience of his great unworthines, leſt he ſhould eate and drinke his own condemnation, and riſe up ſeavenfold more the child of Hell thē he ſate downe. When as the Righteous commeth with joy & chearfulneſſe, whoſe innocent conſcience as it keepeth a continuall feaſt, ſo never then now is it more plentifully fed, and thankfully (*ſaith Grace*) with a *Nunc dimittis, Lord now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace: for mine eyes have ſeene my Salvation.* For now I know that the *Kingdome of Heaven,* (true happineſſe indeed) *it is not meate and drinke, but Righteouſneſſe, and peace, and joy upon joy, joy unſpeakable, even joy in the Holy Ghoſt.* It is a memorable ſpeech of HAMAN, who recounting the glory of his riches, the multitude of his children, the great honours whereunto hee had beene promoted above other Princes by the King; yet in the end concludeth, *All this is nothing, as long as* MORDECAI *ſits in the Kings gate.*

gate. So ſurely hee that ſhall examine the Soules of the *Hamans* of this World, men who for pleaſure, wealth, and honour ſeeme to be the onely happy men; will finde them ſometime ingenuouſly to confeſſe, *All this is nothing*: for there is a MORDECAI, a tormenting conſcience, dayly ſitting in the Gate, which like IONAS his Worme, no ſooner is the Gourd of their felicitie ſprung up a little, but preſently it biteth and gnaweth it downe againe. And therefore we ſee daily nothing more frequent thẽ for the luxurious prodigall upon the ſad remembrance of the follies of his youth, to

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to breake out *into a Letare ſterilis*, Happie ar the barren, and the Soule unſenſible of theſe vain delights, the fruition whereof is but a tranſitorie vanity, and the remembrance a perpetuall vexation of the Spirit. As then God ſaid once unto the *Iewes*, *Bring my tithes into my ſtore-houſe, and prove mee now if I will no open the windows of Heaven, and powre downe a bleſſing without meaſure*, ſo let me ſay here to young and old, Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, in the dayes of thy age, even all the dayes of thy life, ſerve him in chaſtity, in temperance, in juſtice, in charitie, in prayer, in repentance; make a tryall of his goodneſſe, and ſee whether he will not open the windors of Heaven, and in ſtead of ſadneſſe and melancholly, powre downe joy and gladneſſe, the joy and comforts of his Grace and Spirit, whereby like the wiſe men at the appearance of the Starre, thou ſhalt daylie rejoyce and that exceeding greatly.

But ſuppoſe it were true that the ſinner had the whole world at will, came into no miſfortune like other men, were ſubject to no diſcontent, no ſorrow; yet notwithſtanding,

ding, mee thinks, that on ſaying of *Lactantius* migh ſerve to ſettle and compoſe the affections of good man in the conſtan profeſſion of his goodneſſe, againſt all th feares and melancholie which for conſcience an Religions ſake hee migh be ſubject to. *Bonis brevibus mala æterna, & mali brevibus bona æterna, &c.* So hath the providence o GOD ordeined, that fo ſhort pleaſures hee hath threatned us with eternall paines; for ſhort paines hee hath made promiſe of eternall pleaſures. Let everie man therefore ſeriouſlie conſider with himſelfe, how much better it

Inſtitut. lib.6, c.4.

it is to be ſubject here unto a little ſorrow, an aſſurance hereafter of eternall joy, then for ſhort and tranſitorie joyes to expoſe himſelfe unto eternall ſorrow. And thus much by way of anſwer to the young mans Objections; I come now in the laſt place to commend unto him a few ſhort and uſefull Remembrances, and then I conclude.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth: Remember from the dayes of thy Youth, even from thy infancie, to whoſe ſervice thou haſt ſo ſolemnly been conſecrated, what promiſes, what vowes have beene made, at the partaking of on Baptiſme, to embrace on Faith, to ſerve one Lord and be not deceived, Go *will not be mockt*, thou a not now thine owne ma thou haſt not the fre dome to goe ſerve ano ther Maſter. *Deus non vu communionem, ſed ſolus vul poſſidere quod emit.* Fo GOD cannot endure Partner, but what hee hat purchaſt alone, hee wi poſſeſſe alone. *Tanti enim emit, ut ſolus poſſideat*, an indeed ſo deare a price hath hee payed for thy ſoule, that well may he challenge the whole purchaſe to himſelfe.

Auguſt. in Ioh. Tract. 7.

Remember, the way to Heaven is difficult, and at each third ſtep there are mazes and byepaths, and therefore be not raſh in thy courſe, but ſtand oft times and make a pauſe, and inquire which is the old and the right way. Will theſe actions, theſe thoughts, this company, this diſcourſe, this idleneſſe, this expence, will theſe lead a man to Heaven? And though thou often ſee good men take an oblique courſe like the Sunne, croſſe the line and back againe, yet alwayes remember, *Securius eſſe perire non poſſe, quam juxta periculum non periſſe*; that it is the ſafer way not to have ventur'd on a danger, then to

Hieron. Epiſt. 9. l. 2. edit. Caniſ.

to have eſcap't it.

Remember alwayes i
the ſerious eſtimation o
thy ſinne, not to follow th
looſe account of men, wh
are ready to ſet downe fi
ty for an hundred, na
ſometime ſcarce one of
thouſand, but the true an
juſt account of God. C
no ſinne light, which wit
out repentance is heav
enough to weigh th
downe to Hell. Think n
ſo much on the ſmalneſ
of the command, as th
greatneſſe of the comman
der. For even ſmall com
mands oft times, as we ſ
by the example of the fa
of ADAM, *tanto majori in*
juſtitia violantur, quanto fa
ciliori obſervantia poterant

Aug Civ Dei, l. 14 c. 12.

cuſtodivi, are with ſo much the greater injuſtice violated, the greater juſtice puniſhed, by how much with the eaſier obſervance they might have beene fulfilled.

Remember alwayes to prize thy ſoule not according to thy nature but thy grace. The guifts of nature, gentleneſſe, civility, wit, underſtanding, memory, may raiſe us oft times like *Saul* higher then the people, and get their applauſe who judge onely by appearance, but they are the guifts of grace, which like DAVID muſt make us gracious with God, and winne his heart. *Melius eſt eſſe digitum, & eſſe in corpore, quam eſſe oculum*

Aug. in Iohan. Tract. 13.

oculum & evelli de corpore. For a thouſand times better it is in the eye of God to ſtand though but for a finger, and be joyn'd unto the body; then in the eye of man to looke like an eye, and yet to bee pluckt out.

Remember alwayes to part thy care between thy body and thy ſoule, and if ſo much time bee perhaps too pleaſingly ſpent in the food, the dreſſe, the ſleepe, the recreation of the one; doe not forget to ſet apart ſome time alſo for the other. *Noli O corpus noli præcipere tempora.* For why ſhould the pampering of the body ſteal away that time, which migh

Bernard Sermon 6 de Advent Dom.

might be farre better ſpent in the tending of the ſoule. *Potes enim impedire animæ tuæ ſalutem, quam ipſius operari non potes*, too much care of the body, may ruine it ſelfe and the ſoule too; but it is the ſoule alone, which muſt ſave both ſoule and body.

Laſtly and to conclude all, Remember that at the will of the Lord, thou art but a Copy-holder of thine owne life; the Tabernacle of thy body, at his pleaſure he hath ſet up, and at the ſame pleaſure he will pluck downe againe; whether at the firſt or the laſt watch, whether in the morning or evening of thy dayes thou canſt not tell:

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and therefore watch al wayes, that thou mayſt b prepared, that when eve thou ſhalt lay downe this earthly Tabernacle of thy body, thou maiſt with joy and cheerfulneſſe com- mend thy ſoule into th hands of thy Redeemer, in hope of an Eternall Manſion in the Heavens.

Amen.

THE FIFTH SERMON.

IOHN 20. 17.

Touch mee not, for I am not yet aſcended to my Father.

W*Hen the fulneſſe of time was come, God ſent forth his Sonne made of a woman*; that as in the beginginning *the woman* (ſaith St. Pavl) *was in the tranſgreſsion*; firſt in the tranſgreſsion, *not the man*; ſo now the ſeed of the womā, not the ſeed of the man, was to obteine pardon fo this tranſgreſsion, reconcil the woman to the man, and both to God. And ſurely it is not without a myſterie, in the performance of this great myſterie of our redemption, by the paſsion and reſurrection of our Saviour; that when the Shepheard was now ſmitten, and the Sheep (the Diſciples) the men were ſcattered, yet the women they hold faſt together, *his mother and mothers ſiſter*, Mary Magdalen, and Ma-

RY *of Cleophas*, with many others, ſtand reſolute by the Croſſe. The firſt that after his buriall durſt come unto his ſepulchre were women, and that for the greater commendation of this fearfull Sex, *early in the morning, while it was yet darke*. The firſt to whom the Reſurrection was made knowne were women, *Why ſeeke ye the living among the dead* (ſaith the Angell to theſe women) *He is riſen, he is not heere*. The firſt to whom our SAVIOUR himſelfe appeared, was a woman; *Woman why weepeſt thou?* ſaith he to MARY MAGDALEN. Laſtly, the firſt that had the honour to carry theſe glad tydings to his Diſciples was a woman; *Goe to my Brethren* (ſaith he to the ſame Mary) *and ſay unto them I aſcend unto my Father.* But a little before Peter and Iohn were there, they went both into the Sepulchre; yet they ſee, they heard nothing: why did not our Saviour ſhew himſelfe to them, but Mary muſt be his Meſſenger? Chryſologus wil give you the true reaſon; *Vt portet vita, portet reſurrectionis auditum, qua auditum mortis portaverat & ruina*; That as the woman had beene the unhappy agent betweene the the divell and man to procure his fall; ſo now the woman might have the happineſſe to be imployed betweene God and man, and recommend and indeere her ſelfe again by the joyfull news of his reſurrection. If then ſo great hath beene the honour vouchſafed unto this Sexe, and above al unto this MARY, how comes it to paſſe, that amidſt ſo many courteſies, we find here ſo great a ſtrangeneſſe in my Text? Shee that firſt ſees him, ſpeaketh to him, goeth on his errand, muſt not (it ſeemes) preſume to touch him; *Touch mee not, for I am not yet aſcended to my Father.*

In which words, great is the difficultie if wee ſhall enquire, eyther why our

Saviour ſhould thus prohibite Mary to touch him, *Touch me not*; or why hee ſhould give this reaſon for his prohibition; *for I am not yet aſcended to my Father*: In the handling of which words, firſt I will indeavour to cleare the difficulties thereof, and ſecondly in ſeverall obſervations, apply all unto our ſelves.

To begin then with the difficulty of this ſtrange prohibition, *Touch me not*; Wherein ſhall we ſay with ſome that Christ being riſen from the dead, his mortall having put on immortalitie, and death being ſwallowed up in victory, begins now to keepe a diſtance, requires a more reverent reſpect, will not condiſcend to the like familiarity which he had ſuffered heretofore; and therefore ſeemeth heere to give a check to MARY, comming after her wonted manner to embrace him, *Touch me not.* But ſurely this cannot be the reaſon, for we read in the laſt of St. *Matthew*, that this ſame woman with many others, and in all probability even at this ſame time, did touch him, touch him without controll, *held him by the feet, and worſhipped him*: and appearing afterward to his Diſciples, he was ſo farre from beeing thus eſtrang'd, as that, *Behold*, ſaith he, *my hands and* *my feet*; touch me, nay more, *handle mee*, touch mee againe and againe; and St. Iohn in his first Epiſtle bringeth this as an evidence of his Reſurrection, *That which wee have heard*, (ſaith he) *that which we have ſeen*, nay more, *that which our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you.* Or ſhall wee ſay with others, that our Saviour doth not in theſe words reprehend Mary, but inform her: ſhe thought perhaps that Christ being riſen from the dead, would preſently aſcend unto the Father, and therefore now with one large ſalutation ſhee bids him welcome from the dead, ſhee taketh her farewell from among the living, ſhee falleth downe, ſhee holdeth him by the feet, ſhee worſhippeth him, and thinketh ſhee cannot now touch him too long, as beeing never to touch him any more: And for this cauſe they conceive our Saviour might heere ſay, *Touch mee not*, that is; Doe not embrace mee now, as if you were to take your laſt farewell; for I am not yet aſcending to my Father, have many dayes to continue here on earth, and you ſhall have time enough hereafter to viſite, to embrace, to diſcourſe, and therfore now forbeare

your

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your ſalutations, ariſe rather and make others partakers with your ſelfe o the ſame joy; *Goe tell my Brethren, that I aſcend unt my Father.* But this interpretation, however at the firſt propoſall ſomewhat plauſible, yet in the examination will not hold. For firſt it ſeemeth more probable, as I ſhall ſhew you anon, that MARY was miſtaken rather in thinking that hee would ſtay longer then himſelfe intended, then that hee would goe away ſooner then her ſelfe deſir'd. And ſecondly we doe not read that our Saviour did ever afterward appeare to MARY, nay it appeareth rather by the meſ-

ſage ſhee was to deliver; [I
aſcend unto my Father] that
he would informe her that
he was not to ſtay long,
and that hee meant not to
be ſeen often. We may ob-
ſerve in the hiſt. of St. JOHN,
This is now the third time,
but the third time onely,
that CHRIST *ſhewed him-
ſelfe to his Diſciples*; and if
but thrice to them, ſurely
not ſo often to MARY, that
for this cauſe hee ſhould
diſmiſſe her now, as if there
would bee time enough
hereafter, *Touch me not.*

Surely then ſome other
cauſe muſt bee found out,
for the full diſcovery
whereof, two things I ſhall
obſerve. Firſt that MARY
is not heere ſimply forbid
to

to touch her Maſter, that is, to ſalute and to embrace him: for St. *Matth.* plainly tells us, that not MARY only, but all the women *held him by the feet, and worſhipped him*; and this embracing of the feet it was a commō ſolemne ſalutation among the Iewes. Thus the *Shunamite* takes ELISHA by the feet, *Abigail* falls at the feet of DAVID, the Ruler of the Synagogue, the woman of *Cannaan*, at the feet of IESVS; *Cornelius* at the feet of PETER, IOHN of the Angell; onely ſhee is adviſed here not to be too long, too paſſionate in her ſalutations. For it may ſeem probable, that when all the other women were riſen from the ground, ſtill *Mary* kneeleth, imbraceth him, holdeth him by the feet, and as ſhe loved much, ſtriveth by her very geſture to teſtifie the greatneſſe of her love? And we know there is nothing more uſuall in holy ſcripture, then in the ſame latitude of terms to forbid the exceſſe of actions, as if the actions themſelves were forbidden: *I will have mercy and not ſacrifice*; that is not ſacrifice in compariſon of mercy: *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, Take no thought for to morrow*; that is no labor, no thought, in reſpect of the thought and labor for that meat wch endures to everlaſting life; ſo here, *Touch me not*; that is,

doe

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doe not too long lye proſtrate at my feet, doe no dwell upon your ſalutations here, as wee uſe to ſay, Doe not hang upon mee. Secondly; that ſuch was the ignorance not of MARY only, but of all the Diſciples in this great myſtery of CHRISTS riſing from the dead, as that till the day of his Aſcenſion they were ſtill ſtrongly poſſeſt with the conceipt of ſome great worldly happineſſe, which ſhould now preſently befall them. All thoſe Spirituall diſcourſes concerning the *Kingdome of Heaven*, *the twelve Thrones*, *the Houſes and Lands*, they apprehend in a carnall *ſenſe*, and hence is it that they ſo often quarrell *who ſhould be greateſt in the Kingdome of Heaven?* And what was their earthly conceit of this heavenly Kingdome, appeareth by that queſtion of theirs in the firſt of the *Acts: Lord wilt thou not now reſtore the Kingdome*, (or the Kingdome of Heaven) *unto Iſrael?* meaning thereby ſuch a felicitie in this life, whereby they hop't to enjoy a little heaven upon earth: and this ſeemeth to bee one maine reaſon of MARIES exceſſive joyes and ſalutations; now at length ſhee hop'd the Kingdome would bee reſtored, the Thrones erected, the

Houſes and Lands divide
upon the falſe apprehe
ſion of which imagina
happineſſe, our SAVIOU
thus gently correcteth an
informeth her, *Touch m*
not. Be not therefore ove
ioy'd with my preſenc
doe not for this cauſe ſ
zealouſly imbrace thee,
if I were now riſen to re
ſtore the Kingdome unt
Iſrael: for *my Kingdome*,
have told you, *is not of thi*
world; but as I am no
riſen from the grave, ſ
muſt I ſhortly aſcen
from the earth too, to aſ-
cend to Heaven unto my
Father; and there is the
place of your true hap-
pineſſe, there are the man-
ſions which I am going to

prepare, and therefore now ariſe, and that my brethren may not deceive themſelves with the like worldly expectations; *Goe tell them that I aſcend unto my Father*. And indeed very remarkable it is, that however our Saviour, after his riſing from the dead, intended to ſtay forty dayes, before his aſcenſion up to Heaven, to certifie and publiſh the truth of his Reſurrection, to recollect the diſtracted thoughts of his Diſciples; yet in all his apparitions hee diſcovereth himſelfe ſtrangely, and by ſtarts, in one forme to Mary, in another to the two Diſciples; cometh ſodainly to

their aſtoniſhments, whi
the doores are ſhut, an
after ſome ſhort conf
rence leaveth them as mu
amaz'd, and vaniſheth o
of their ſight: and he
you ſee MARY hath ſcar
leaſure to bid him we
come, but preſently he
ready to bid her farewel
And all this was don
that by thus ſtrangely a
pearing it might manifeſ
ly appeare, that therefo
he declin'd the frequenc
and concourſe of the peo
ple, therefore he refrain
the reiterating of his pla
ſible miracles, therefore h
withdrew himſelfe fro
the familiarity even of hi
owne brethren, that he
might draw their minds
from

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from that ſtrong intention wherewith they were faſtened on things earthly, that he might let them underſtand that hee was not now riſen to reſtore the Kingdome unto *Iſrael*; and then afterwards, as they perhaps might imagine, dye againe; but that, as St. PAVL ſaith, *beeing raiſed from the dead hee might dye no more, death might have no more dominion over him: for in that he dyed, he dyed unto ſinne once, but that he liveth he liveth unto God*; liveth not to continue upon earth, but to aſcend to Heaven unto his Father, and therefore now, *Touch me not*, ſaith he, *Set not your affections on* *things below, but ſeeke thoſe things which are above.* And thus much for the Interpretation of my Text; I come now to commend ſome obſervations to our ſelves.

Firſt then when we ſee, after ſo many heavenly inſtructions, the earthly-mindedneſſe of *Mary*, that ſo are her thoughts fixt upon things below, and for this cauſe ſo is ſhee overjoy'd with the preſence of her Maſter, as that hee is forc'd with a gentle checke to reprove her indiſcretion, *Touch mee not*. This may teach us as St. IOHN hath already made the application to our hand, *that we love not*, love not too well, *the world, nor the things of the world*, that in our prayers and deſires we bee not too ſolicitous; Would I had this Houſe, this Land, this Wealth, this Honour, leſt beeing guilty of the ſame errour, wee may bee ſubject to the ſame cenſure, and ſeeme to heare from Heaven, a *Noli me tangere*, doe not for this cauſe *Touch me*, doe not importune mee. It is a memorable anſwer of our SAVIOVR, when the Mother made that ambitious requeſt, *Grant that my two Sonnes may ſit, one at thy right hand, and another at thy left hand in thy Kingdome*; *Are you able*, ſaith he, *to drinke of the Cup, that I ſhall drinke of, and to bee baptized with the baptiſme, that I ſhall be baptized with?* not with the baptiſme of water and the ſpirit, but with blood and Martyrdome: the more pleaſing and honourable are the conditions ſhe deſireth, the more harſh and unpleaſant are the conditions he propoſeth; as indeed there is nothing more frequent with God, then to anſwer the deſires of men by contraries, becauſe they are contrary oft times to that main end, which we ſhould all deſire; the good and welfare of our ſoules. And thogh we al know, *Not many noble, not many rich,* but

Bleſſed rather are the poore, bleſſed are you when you ſuffer perſecution; yet we are all, out of a ſenſual love to our ſelves, too prone to preſſe God with that requeſt of Iabez; *O that thou wouldſt bleſſe me indeed, and inlarge my coaſts, and that thy hand might be with mee, and that thou wouldſt keepe me from evill, that it may not hurt me*: ſo that God knowing better how to give, then wee know how to aske, as ofttimes in his anger he granteth our requeſts, ſo ofttimes again in his love denieth them; *& male uſurus eo quod vult accipere, deo potius miſerante non accipit*, and ſuch things which hee foreſeeth wee aske to our

Aug. in Iohan. Tract. 73.

owne hurt, he granteth us a favor in not granting them. When Balaam tempted with the rewards of divination brought unto him by the Princes of *Balack*, was deſirous to goe and to curſe *Iſrael*, and for this cauſe ask't counſell of *God*, the firſt anſwere he receiveth, is a *Noli me tangere*, *Touch me not, doe not intreat me; for thou ſhalt not goe with them, Thou ſhalt not curſe this people, for they are bleſſed.* But upon the ſecond meſſage, when *Balack* ſendeth more Princes, and more honorable, with promiſe to promote him, and grant what ever he ſhould ask, he commeth the ſecond time to God, and then becauſe hee was ſo earneſt, *Riſe up,* ſaith God, *and goe with them:* but preſently we read that the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt him, becauſe hee went; and wee finde him branded by St. *Peter* with the perpetuall ignominie of *loving the wages of unrighteouſneſſe*; for the love whereof we read afterward that even by the hand of *Iſrael,* for whoſe ſlaughter he was ſo ready to bee hyred, himſelf was ſlain. Thus oft times upon the covetous deſires of worldly bleſſings God puts men off by the directiõ of his word by the motiõs of his ſpirit, with a *Touch me not;* do not for theſe things ſo earneſtly

Nũb. 31.

ſolicite me: for that which you hope will raiſe you, may chance to be your ruine. But yet if with an impetuous affection the heart be ſo ſtrong fixt, that it will not be removed, he giveth them their harts deſire, and according to the largeneſſe of their heart, ſuffereth them to inlarge their eſtate, and make their gaine their godlines: and now in a ſenſuall jollity, when indeed they are moſt curſt, are they forward moſt to bleſſe themſelves, with a *Soule take thy eaſe, for thou haſt now enough layd up in ſtore:* when as wee know there is no evill more common under the Sun, then goods thus purchaſed, to prove the undoing of the purchaſer, *the ſtone will cry out of the wall, and the beame out of the timber will make anſwer; Woe to the man that thus addes houſe to houſe, and land to land.* For what ſhal it profit thee for a time to have gain'd the whole world, & in the end to looſe thine owne ſoule for ever? *Et infeliciſſime omniũ, cogitas quam bene alii poſt te vivant, non cogitas quam male ipſe moriaris*, and unhappy wretch thou art, to pleaſe thy ſelfe to think how happily thy poſterity, rais'd by thy art and induſtry, ſhall live, and never once think'ſt how miſerably thy ſelfe muſt dye. And indeed ſtrange and wonderful it is to

Salvian. ad Eccleſ. Cathol. l. 3

to ſee the impotent deſire of the world, to purchaſe good houſe, good lād, good drink, good aire, & yet how ſlender is their care to bee good themſelves; *quaſi hoc ſit homini maximum bonum, habere bona omnia præter ſeipſum*, as if this were the chief good of man, to have all things good about him but himſelf. As then wee read, that when *Moſes* made that paſſionate petitiō unto God, *O Lord thou haſt begun to ſhew thy ſervant thy greatnes, and thy mighty hand; let me I pray thee go over, and ſee that good land beyond Iordan*; God with a ſhort anſwer ſtops his mouth, *let it ſuffice thee, ſpeak no more of this matter, for thou ſhalt not goe*: ſo if

Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. 3. *c.* 1.

Deut. 3.

if ſometime our earthly deſires ſhall make the like petitions unto God, may we prevent his anſwer by replying to our ſelves, *Let it ſuffice thee* to have ſpoke once or twice, and if he wil not heare thee, ſpeake no more. And indeed what madnes is it for a man to be importunatly ſolicitous for ſuch things, wch he knoweth not whether they will prove unto him good or ill? For notwithſtanding that great licentiouſnes wch cōmonly wealth & honor uſurpe unto themſelves; ſo ſtrict an impoſition doe we finde layd upon all things under the Sunne, that hee that ſhall ſeriouſly bethink himſelf of his account, and that of him who receiveth much, much ſhall bee requir'd, ſhal find perhaps the ods to be but very litle, not to have the world to uſe, or (as St. PAUL requires) *to uſe the world, as if we uſ'd it not*; unleſſe in truth the taske may prove more eaſie, with patiēce to want the world, then with moderation to injoy it. *Quotus enim quiſq; ſapientum eſt cui non creſcat cum proſperitate vitioſitas?* For it is a great hazard to the vertue of a wiſe man, but that if riches increaſe, ſin wil increaſe too. *Labour not then for the meat that periſheth*, nor take much thought for the bleſſings of this life. For al theſe things touch not, trouble not the Maſter;

Salvian de Guber. Dei, lib. 7.

Maſter, with an honeſt and faire endeavor of our own dayly to aske our dayly bread it will ſuffice; if we wil importune him, let us make choyſe of bleſſings worth our importunity, & not for religion onely, but for ſhame, leſt it ſhould bee ſaid that we are more careful of our bodies then our ſoules, let us *firſt ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe*, and then though in a low condition, it will be no hard matter to attaine unto that height of happines, which St. *Hierom* commends in one of his devout women; *quæ unius cellula clauſa anguſtiis latitudine paradiſi fruebatur*, though cloiſtered within the com-

De laudibus Aſellæ. Ep. 15.

paſſe of a narrow Cell, by divine contemplation to expatiate throughout the whole latitude of Heaven. So ſhall we put more gladnes in our heart, then if our corne and wine were never ſo plentifully increaſt, and alwaies ſuch bleſſings God is beſt pleas'd to grant, which are moſt profitable for us to receive.

Secondly wee may obſerve, that as *Chriſt* fruſtrats the expectation of *Mary* in denying the worldly bleſſings ſhe deſireth: ſo, to cōfort her againe, he exceeds her expectation in propoſing the hope of heavenly bleſſings, more thē ſhe now thought on. No ſooner did *Mary* (rapt with a ſodaine joy)

joy) cry out *Rabboni*, have I found thee, O thou whom my ſoule loveth; no ſooner could ſhe fall downe and worſhip him, as for joy that he was riſen, ſo in hope that ſhe ſhould bee rais'd too, rais'd to honour in in that new Kingdome which ſhee perſwaded her ſelfe would now ſhortly be reſtored, but preſently all this conceited happines is blaſted, with a *Noli me tangere*, Touch mee not. Doe not therefore honour me, as if I were now riſen to raiſe you to honour here on earth; for though I be riſen, I am not yet aſcended, and till I be aſcended you muſt waite: yet with the ſame breath wherwith ſhee is disheartned, ſhe is comforted again; for as the *Yet* in my text plainly intimateth, and the end of the verſe expreſſeth it, he was ſhortly to aſcend *to his Father, and their Father, to his God, and their God*; & then and there would hee build up the houſes, ſet up the thrones, and make them all Kings and Prieſts. Thus is it uſuall with GOD to with hold leſſer bleſſings, where hee intendeth to beſtow greater: for the earth, whereon MARY had now ſeated the throne of her deſires, ſhall not be worthy to bee the footſtoole of that happines, which he intẽded to prepare. Indeed if in this life only wee had hope of

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all men, good men were moſt miſerable. But *bleſſed be God* (ſaith St. PAVL) *who hath bleſſed us with all ſpirituall bleſſings, in cœleſtibus, in things heavenly, in places heavenly:* and againe, *Bleſſed be God* (ſaith St. PETER) *who hath begotten us unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible, reſerved for us in the Heavens:* and therefore oft times withdrawes his favors from us in the depth below, that wee may the more earneſtly ſeeke after them in the height above. For as God made ſome creatures meerly heavenly, without any dependance for their preſervation upon things below, others meerly earthly, without any hope or expectation of any happineſſe above: ſo hee made man in a condition betweene both, his body from the earth earthly, but his ſoule a ſparke frõ Heaven; & according to the two different parts whereof he doth conſiſt, he hath provided him two differen manſions: firſt the earth, and then the Heaven. Now however betweene theſe two manſions there be no compare; for the earth, which we ſee, is temporall; but the Heaven which wee ſee not, is eternall: yet becauſe, as in the abſence of MOSES the people come flocking unto AARON, and *Make thou Gods*, ſay they, *to goe before us, for as for this*

MOSES *we know not what is become of him*: ſo in the abſence of Heaven wee are too prone to lay hold upon the earth, and ſet our affections upon things below; the providence of God hath purpoſely blaſted the felicitie of all things ſublunarie, ſet a *Noli me tangere*, vanitie and vexation of ſpirit on them all, that even this vexation here on earth, may raiſe our ſpirits up to Heaven, with a *Domine illic tabernacula*, Lord let us there, there make our Tabernacles: For alas the earth it hath no conſtant forme nor comelineſſe, and when we look upon it, there is no true beauty that we ſhoul deſire it. If we complain that long and tedious is ou expectation here on earth, before ever we can come t injoy thoſe felicities in he-ven, let us ſolace our ſelve to think, that it is enough, & abundãtly enough, *that th Diſciple be as his Maſter, an the ſervant as his Lord:* now let us look upon our Lo and Maſter, and forty daie is he tempted in the Wil derneſs, hungry, and thirſty in a barren and dry land, & *yet* he is not aſcended. *The Foxes have holes, the Bird of the aire have neſts, the So of man not where to lay his head*, and *yet* he is not aſcended. He is betrayed, arreigned, condemned, crucified, buried, and *yet* he is not aſcended. And that we may know this delay of his proceeded not out of any impotency, but was meritorious and exemplarie unto us, he riſeth againe, and the ſame power of his, which rais'd him from the grave, could preſently have lifted him up to Heavē, yet he cōtinueth viſiting, cōforting, inſtructing his Diſciples, & *yet* he is not aſcended. The Lord himſelf, you ſee, hath tarried, tarried our leyſure, tarried for us, and ſhall not we waite patiently and tarry the leyſure of the Lord. Perhaps he therfore makes us tarry, that daily here adding to our grace, hee may one day adde alſo to our

glory:

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Hieron. ep. 33. ad Caſtratium.

glory: *Et libenter ſuſcipiam diſpenſationis moram magnitudine favoris duplicatam,* and who would not forbeare the principal a while, to receive it hereafter with ſuch intereſt? perhaps therfore himſelf tarries, becauſe we are not yet prepared for his cõming. We complaine oft times, upon the ſenſe of ſicknes, and ſorrow; *How long Lord, how long wilt thou abſent thy ſelfe?* Whenas indeed upon the conſcience of our ſins, we might rather turn our cõplaint to a confeſſiõ, how long Lord, how lõg have we bin abſent frõ thee? Thy word hath been oftẽ preacht unto us, *in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon,* by thy Miniſters teaching, reproving, exhorting, and *yet* we have not obey'd. Thy grace hath bin graciouſly offred unto us, al the day long ſtanding at the dore of our harts and knocking, and *yet* we have not opened. Thou haſt made open proclamation; *Come unto me all yee that are weary and heavy laden, and I will eaſe you:* and *yet* though never ſo heavie laden, wee will not bee weary of our ſinnes, wee will not ſeeke out for eaſe. Can wee then wonder that God ſhould yet delay to put an end unto our ſorrowes, when as our ſelves have yet refus'd to put an end unto our ſinnes? Can we bee impatient at the forbearance of that happineſſe, which if God ſhould deale with us, as we with him, not yet, nor yet, nor ever, ſhould we bee ſo happy to enjoy? *Why art thou then ſo troubled, O my ſoule;* may every pious ſoule now ſay; *and why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? delight thou in the Lord, and hee will give thee thy hearts deſire.* If thou faile of thy hearts deſire on earth (*Mary* her ſelf you ſee hath thus been diſappointed) yet thou ſhalt abundantly bee recompenc't in heaven. For though here thou ſeem'ſt to be but dead, dead in regard of the fruition of any great felicity in this life, dead in the opinion of the meere natural man, who beleeveth not the hope of any life to come; yet thou haſt a life hidden with Chriſt in God, and when Chriſt who is thy life ſhal appeare, then ſhalt thou alſo appeare with him in Glory.

Laſtly as you have ſeene whether Chriſt is aſcended & where he wil be *Toucht*, ſo now behold to whom he is aſcended, and what hopes we have to *Touch* him. My text tels you that as he was to aſcend ſo he aſcended to his Father. Now if you ſhall ſay that Chriſt had a Father to aſcend to, and *a Father pitieth his owne child*; but how ſhal we aſcend, *ſhew us a Father too and it ſufficeth*? I will ſhew you: and indeed with joy of heart we may obſerve, that all the honours of Christ are for the moſt part diffuſive and communicative, and even of this neare Relation of Father & Sonne we alſo doe participate. *Thou art my Sonne*, my onely begotten Son, ſait the Father vnto him, *i* *whom I am well pleas'd*; an pleas'd ſo well, that in hi he hath recōcil'd the worl vnto himſelfe, of enemi he hath made us his adopted Sons, and given us th priviledge to pray vnt him, *Abba Father*. If the my Text will not conte you, read but the word following, and you ca wiſh no more: *Goe to m* *Brethren, and ſay unto them*,

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I aſcend unto my Father; but he ſtayes not there, *To my Father*, ſaith he; *and your Father, to my God, and your God*. And ſurely, as when the Father giveth the Son, ſo when the Son giveth the Father, *together with him he will give us all things*. And indeed when I compare both Teſtaments together, & obſerve at ſundry times, thoſe divers manners, whereby God in his goodneſſe hath pleas'd to make manifeſt, not the effects onely, but even the language of his love, me thinks, (as after ſome cloudy ſtorme), I ſee the Heavens looke cleare, againe and ſmiling) whereas before God ſpake, as it were in a mighty winde &

Earthquake, looking high and holding his people under with thoſe Majeſticke names of *Lord*, and *Lord of Hoſts*, now with a courteous affabilitie he hath bowed the Heavens, ſpeaketh in a ſtill & a ſoft voice, & as if he had ſet a vaile before his Majeſtie, calleth himſelfe *our Father*, and *the God of peace*. And ſurely but this ſingle compellation *Father* proceeding from a piouſly devoted ſoule, attended with ſighes & groanes, the Hearts moſt powerfull Oratorie, is able to make ſuch requeſts, wch as our ſelves oftimes, for feare and trembling, know not how to utter, ſo neither doth God know how to deny. The

Prodigall you ſee, after hee had ſpent all, & that vngraciouſly too, yet when hee thinkes upon the gracious name of *Father. I will goe to my Father*, ſaith he, and going but with a reſolution onely to ſay, *Father I have ſinned*, he is anticipated wth imbracements, & by an indulgent wellcome hath his pardon ſeal'd unto him, before he could have time to aske it. For the armes of Gods mercy, they are like the windore of *Noahs* Arke: if the Dove, our ſoule ſhal ſometime fly out, & the overflowings of vngodlineſſe ſhall make us afraid, let us returne upon the wing, & with humility & repentance crave a new admiſſion, and behold all the day long are theſe armes of his wide open to embrace us, and reſtore us to our reſt again. For *doth a Father pity his owne child*; and will not the Lord bee mercifull to them that feare him? nay *call no man Father* upon earth, for beyond all naturall affection we have a Father in Heaven, and his love is like that of *Ionathan* and *David*, even *greater then the love of women.* Whē *Abraham* intercedeth for *Sodom*, you ſee hee puts in many doubts and feares, *I have taken upon me to ſpeake, who am but duſt and aſhes; and let not my Lord be angry, and once more, and once more let me ſpeake*: and ſtill hee feareth ſearcheth, and ſtill hee ſpeaketh, and ſtill he obtaineth what he ſpeaketh for: neither doth God in mercy ceaſe to grant his petitions, till he in modeſty giveth them over. Thus ſometime if the conſcience of our ſinnes, and terrour of the throne of Iuſtice, and thoſe terrible names of *Lord*, and *jealous God*, ſhall make us to tremble, and bee exceedingly afraid, as indeed in this confident age it is good that we ſhould ſometime bee frighted, yet upon our true humiliation and contrition, we may boldly appeale from the throne of Iuſtice to the throne of Grace, and that gracious name of *Father*; and then though the fleſh have been a *Sodome*, yet if the ſpirit now become an *Abraham*, duſt and aſhes as we are, we may ſpeake; and once more, and once more may we ſpeake, til we bring our ſins, from fifty ſhall I ſay? nay from an innumerable number, for *who knowes how oft he offends?* to forty, to twenty, to tenne, to nothing; and blot them out of the booke of Gods remembrance. Let me then ſay once againe, *Why art thou ſo diſquieted O my ſoule, and why art thou ſo troubled within me? put thou thy truſt in the Lord, and bee doing good*, implore the adoption of a ſonne, and get thy ſoule ſeal'd unto the day of redemption, and then with confidence maiſt thou appeare before the Tribunall of God, where thou ſhalt finde the Iudge thy Father, thine Advocate thy Brother.

But let us beware that we doe not pleaſe and content our ſelves with a titular alliance, for it is not a *Lord, Lord*, nor *my Father, my Father*, will ſuffice. *Aſſumptio religioſi nominis ſponſio devotionis.* Our challenging of God to bee our Father, challengeth from us the duty of his Sonnes. For as under the Law, if they were obedient unto his will, and with care and conſcience did performe their ſervice to their Lord, he did ſhew himſelfe a *Father* to his

Salvian ad Eccleſ. Cathol. l. 3.

ſervants; ſo under the Goſpell, if like graceleſſe children wee ſhall neglect the will of our heavenly Father, he will ſhew himſelfe a *Lord* unto his *Sonnes*: and as then not every one that cryed *Lord*, ſo nor now every one that prayeth *Father*, but he that doth the will, whether of Lord or Father, he and he alone ſhall be acceptable in his ſight.

So then to draw all to a concluſion. As wee are all already *filii regni*, children of the Kingdome, and called to be Saints, ſo becauſe wee know ſuch children for their diſobedience may in the end bee ſhut out of this Kingdome, let us ſtrive to be *filii regnantes*, to reign as children in this Kingdome, and make our calling ſure. CHRIST is now aſcended up on high unto his Father, and hath given guifts to us, ſuch as will inable us to follow him; let us then bee carefull ſo to improve theſe guifts, to *adde to our Faith vertue, to vertue knowledge*, temperance, patience, godlineſſe, and charity, that as our graces riſe, ſo may our hope of glory riſe withall, and when age and death ſhall preſſe downe our bodies to the grave, our ſoules may be lifted up to Heaven, and take a comfortable farewell of our friends, even in the very language of our Saviour;

Weepe not for mee, but for your ſelves, for I am now aſcending to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.

Amen.

FINIS.

Errata.

FOr *Iohanni* read *Iohanne*, *page* 8. neceſsitude read viciſſitude, *p.* 11, ſo r. and, *p.* 25, leſt r. left, *p.* 46, that *dele*, *p.* 47, I. *dele*, *p.* 53, for *dele*, *p.* 63, our r. one, *p.* 72, ſtrong r. ſtrange, *p.* 77 *beneficii* r. *beneficiis*, *p.* 114, *parturiebas* r. *parturiebat*, *p.* 122, *filiis* r. *filium*, *p.* 143, [illegible] r. ſuccenturiate, *p.* 150, Those r. these, *p.* 153, heavie, and r. and heavie, *p.* 177, Nor r. ; nor, [illegible] wherever r. whoever, *p.* 183, puniſheth r. pincheth, *p.* 203, this r. the, *p.* 208, an r. on, *p.* 212, *cuſtodivi* r. *cuſtodiiſti*, *p.* 216, that thou r. that ſo alwayes thou, *p.* 223, hold r. holy, *p.* [illegible] have r. but have, *p.* 227, We r. we, *p.* 231, *dele* 2. *p.* 256, *favoriis*, *favoris*, *p.* 2[illegible], not r. nor.